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ABSTRACT

Papers included are: (1) Presidential Address, (2) Challenges to Early Childhood Educators, (3) The Home Start Program in the U.S.A., (4) Early Childhood Training Programs, (5) Initiatives being Taken in Early Childhood Education Field by the Australian Government, (6) Audiovisual Materials for Parents' Discussion Groups, (7) The Role of the Adult in Early Learning and Experience, (8) Recording Infant and Early Child Development, (9) Self-Concepts and Scholastic Success, and (10) Teaching Reading in the Preschool. (MS)

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PAPERS
OF THE
FIRST
NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

PAPERS

of the

FIRST NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Held at Ursula College
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

May 17 - 18 1975

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AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

The Association was formed in 1974 with the objective of having professional people in the field discussing issues in early childhood education on a national level.

The first Annual General Meeting and Conference was was held in May 1975. The papers from this Conference have been compiled in this booklet.

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Julia Solomon

We have been promised an intensive and hopefully stimulating exercise. Indeed the effects of our stimulation may well have become so apparent as to make us forget all the other niceties that a conference should have and so I'm reversing what might be a conventional order of things and making, while I welcome you, a thank you speech as well.

I wish to thank first of all Jim Clough who in his capacity as observer at an executive meeting last August accepted the position of convener of the conference and at the same time, unashamedly committed the ACT Chapter to organising it. On behalf of all of you, I wish to thank Jim, the ACT Chapter, Anita Beattyman, Ruth Dobson, Yvonne Winer, Loma Rudduck, Isla Stamp and Simone Howells and their co-workers who accepted Jim's commitment and who for more than six months worked towards this goal. It is a tribute to their efforts that the audience today far exceeds our initial expectations, having, as we do, not only most of our foundation members but many who have come to listen, to be informed and perhaps to share opinions on the issues that concern us all. To members, to future members and to visitors we extend a warm welcome.

It is a tribute also to the convening committee that this conference can boast such an array of imposing speakers, and that the topics they have chosen, cover the gamut of important — and contemporary themes, on early childhood education. A special welcome is offered to our guest speakers from overseas, Lilian Katz, Ann O'Keefe, and Jackie Goodnow. We appreciate deeply, their willingness to share with us their time and expertise.

May I say, as President of the Association, that I believe this conference gives us the first opportunity to make an impact on the general population of early childhood educators and perhaps on some of the public at large. And having a male convenor for the conference is only part of the reason for such an impact. Being 1975 and International Women's Year, some of you may think that it was deliberately planned, to have a man at our helm, in order to show that whereas our work is in a field traditionally dominated by women, we are by no means afraid of the male. And whereas other women's organisations are celebrating their liberation by proving their independence of men, we are showing the inverted form of liberation by showing that men are still useful. Regardless, however, of whether International Women's Year has affected our planning, or whether I'm using it as an excuse to say that we wish to welcome men to our ranks, we may well find that this year has a substantial effect on our future.

The women's liberation movement is a celebration of women's desire for self fulfillment in ways other than motherhood. It is no coincidence that in the same year we see the overt expression of women's need for emancipation, we also celebrate the "discovery of the child" by the Australian Government, if this can be measured in terms of money. While mothers join the workforce, in unprecedented numbers, the Australian government is funding the caretaking of their offspring, with an unprecedented and seemingly endless flow of money, and we who call ourselves the Early Childhood Educators of Australia, are part of that caretaking team. As I say that, I expect some of us are bristling a little, because we have traditionally insisted that there is a distinction between the educator and the caretaker. The caretaker being the one who minds the child and the educator, the one who teaches the child.

Yet if we take the American definition, as we take so many things American, to mean "to care about" and the Australian definition as "having children listen and obey the instructions of the teacher", then minding in the sense of caring about, may well be more educational in its liberal interpretation, while listening to and obeying, in that it keeps the child quiet and safe, may be real child minding in the conventional sense. It is in my opinion, just these sorts of shifts in definition and interpretation, which will present problems for the early childhood educator in the future.

If we avoid the problems or refuse answers, as the traditional pre-school educator has tended to do in the past, we may be doing much less for the child than was done 3,000 years ago, when an ancestor of mine, whose story is

written up in a truthful but unpopular book, was asked to judge a case in which two mothers claimed ownership of one baby. And Solomon said "the solution is obvious, simply cut the baby in two — that bit for one mother and that bit for the other". The message was prophetic in that it has projected precisely the social and educational dilemma of the present day. For today, we have in fact, cut the child up. We have not only bisected but cut it across in numerous ways, socio-economically, horizontally, vertically, and longitudinally, and in doing so lost something that traditional pre-school educators would never have countenanced — the whole child.

For we are tending to say, the child of the non-working mother; he is for the educator; the child of the working mother; he's for the child minder; the child in the morning session, between nine a.m. and twelve is for the educator; the afternoon, particularly late afternoon, for the child minder. The head of the child to the educator, to be filled with facts, concepts and literacy skills, and the body to the child minder, to be fed, kept clean and entertained. The child under four years to the child minder, and over four years to the educator. The child in school to the educator and before and after school to the child minder.

While people 3,000 years ago in their wisdom, saw the anomaly of bisecting the child, today, the anomaly in dividing the child between minding and education is hardly a public issue. For in 1974, while Government departments were sorting out their priorities, the social welfare aspects of child services aroused some interest and won the day leaving the traditional early childhood educator retreating with traditional politeness. They abdicated their original role of setting up education standards for the young child and watched uneasily while their role was assumed by those who were never trained for it.

Thus the public on the whole remains comparatively ignorant and apathetic about the changes that are occurring in the care and education of the young child. Perhaps they are completely satisfied; good employment and good baby sitters may be all that a society asks or needs. I guess the question for this conference should be, Are we satisfied? If satisfaction is measured in terms of comfortable jobs, and adequate salaries, then of course most of us are satisfied, and could easily reflect the complacent outlook of the apathetic public.

But if we look at professional criteria, we may come up with some odd conclusions. We may well find for instance, that the definition of the early childhood educator, is "one who has been overlooked by both child care and education, who has lost her identity, and is patiently waiting to be rediscovered." We may also come up with the conclusion, that women's emancipation means children's captivity, and that all of us sitting here today, are the captors of young children, being paid to mind them in any way at all, so that their mothers may stay in the work force, and so that the bureaucratic contrivers who have not for a long time if ever, seen a child under eight may continue to contrive. In which case, perhaps we should resolve that we should return the children to their mothers as quickly as possible and at the same time find some way of making mothers want their children and politicians want mothers. Then perhaps we can start again, and have a good look at the child from birth to eight, as he really is.

Then perhaps we can start as never before applying our knowledge of child development in terms of a learning environment, which we will let the children use as they wish, and not as Government or teachers dictate. Then we can start testing hypotheses about how children learn, and instead of starting with Piaget's notion of conservation, we could start with Piaget's notion of permanence and see how that affects the young child. We could begin to look at theories of dependence, attachment and independence. We could observe the number of children who are desperate not to be pushed into independence too soon. We can also observe how the child learns literacy skills and what the teachable moments are for each child. Using the teachable moment may prevent the so called learning problems, that whole departments are now set up to correct. If we could come to grips with any of these or other issues, either individually, or collectively, at this conference, we will have made an impact, as an organisation and our ranks will be strengthened.

In the meantime, I am reminded of the fact, that at least one great philosopher has said, "all living is meeting." And the most I can wish you is that this weekend, we should all live well.

CHALLENGES TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

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For early childhood educators there is no shortage of challenges: we face constant demands requiring an increasing range of skills, understandings, responsibilities and commitments. In this paper I want to address some challenges facing us in our central roles as teachers, whether we are teachers of children or of adults. I want to speak in terms of what I call principles. You may be more comfortable calling them organizing ideas or probability statements, bold (or timid) assertions, fundamentals or presuppositions. In any case, I have acquired the habit of calling them principles, i.e. propositions which, although not always true, seem sufficiently general to be useful for organizing information, making plans, evaluating and experimenting with diverse aspects of teaching.

1. *The principle of congruity.* It seems useful to assert as a first principle that the way we teach teachers should be congruent in many basic aspects — though not all — with the way we want them to teach children. This principle seems to be a restatement of the truism "practice what you preach". But I offer it not just in order to safeguard ourselves against being found hypocritical. The principle seems useful because there are some elements of teaching which apply equally well to all teaching, whether of children or adults. Thus the principle of congruity is a *first* one. The following examples should serve to clarify what we may think of then as *generic* principles of teaching.

2. *The Principle of Knowing the Learner.* Let us take it as a useful (though not always a true) principle that we cannot teach anything important to someone we do not know. Obviously this is not always true. We have all been taught by people who did not know us, e.g. by authors of books written before our time, and by lecturers to large groups in which we were just one of the crowd. You will note however, that I have used the qualifier "important". We could of course develop volumes of argument over that choice of qualifier. But, such arguments might give us all a proper case of "analysis paralysis" which, in turn might inhibit our capacities for action. And teachers must be free to act! I am using this term "important" here to refer to our constructions of those aspects of reality which are relatively central to our lives and our work. Such constructions as how we explain others' behaviour to ourselves, our constructions of cause-and-effect relationships in events which matter to us, or our conceptions of those things about which we have relatively intense feelings, concerns, anxieties and hopes.

This second principle takes on significance in teaching — at every age level — because a major function of a teacher is to help the learner to improve, refine, develop or change his/her *understanding** of the task, concept, idea or skill to be learned. And in order to fulfill this function the teacher has to uncover what the learner's understanding of the task or concept to be learned actually is. Most of us who are teachers fret over how much "material" we have to "cover". Certainly adequate coverage of many content areas presents us with persistent problems. But it seems to me that the uncovering of the learner's understandings of the relevant realities can help us to make more informed decisions about what "material" is most useful to "cover" (see Duckworth, E. 1972).

Along similar lines, I think it is useful to assume that every learner does in fact have an understanding of the situation, task or concept to be learned. But the understanding may be insufficient, incorrect, or inappropriate in some

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* I am using the term **understanding** as synonymous with the phrase **construction** of reality.

way. Of all the ways in which understandings may vary, I want to concentrate on one variable in particular: namely the extent to which the learner's understanding of the situation, task or concept is *differentiated* or complex. Take for example, my understanding of the game of tennis. It is a relatively undifferentiated one. I know that at least two people play with rackets and balls on a court with lines, and that they hit the ball across the net to each other. However, my son's understanding of tennis is highly and finely differentiated. His understanding includes conceptions about games and sets, singles and doubles, rallies and vollies, loves and deuces, types of "shots", as well as some intricate minutiae of appropriate dress. Another example of variations in differentiation or complexity can be seen when we consider that a five-year-old has an understanding of where she (or he) comes from, i.e. reproduction. If at twenty she has studied genetics or obstetrics her understanding will be even further finely differentiated. That understanding will include facts, concepts and theory at a range of levels of abstraction and concreteness, with subsumed interdependent facts, concepts, and theory, as well as a variety of images, memories, associated feelings and ideas. One can say, then, that as a five-year-old she had an understanding of the phenomenon, but it was not as differentiated as it could ultimately become.

I am presupposing that in the general case, a teacher is one who has a relatively finely differentiated or complex understanding of what is to be learned, and accepts the responsibility for helping the learner increase the extent to which his/her understanding matches the teacher's. If our understanding of relevant events/phenomena are not more differentiated, more useful, more appropriate or more accurate than those of our learners, then we lack the legitimate authority to be their teachers.

We might then amend our second principle as the principle of knowing the learner's understandings of what is to be learned. I am proposing that this is a *generic* problem for all teachers of all learners. If I want to teach a student, for example, techniques of conversing with children, one essential approach of several I might employ would be to uncover that student's construction or understanding of the "teacher-child conversation situation". It seems reasonable to hypothesize that the probability of successful teaching (of important learnings) increases with increased knowledge of the individual learner, in particular, of the individual learner's construction of the relevant reality. A related hypothesis is that the greater the informality in the learning situation, the greater access the teacher has to relevant knowledge of the learner, and that the greater the knowledge of the learners' understandings the greater the probability that the teacher will respond appropriately. Informality in classrooms has been a popular conference topic during the last few years. However, its popularity seems to be related more to philosophical positions than to the principle of knowing the learner. I should add here the hypothesis that there probably is an optimal amount of informality for each classroom unit (of adults or children) and perhaps for each individual.

Another implication of our second principle is that it seems useful to teach our students (children or adults) tactics and strategies by which to inform us where they are, how they are constructing the problem to be solved, what confuses them and how they understand whatever is to be learned. For example we can teach children to say to us. "I'm lost", "Hold it", "Go over that again", "I don't understand", "I'm confused" etc. On one occasion I recommended to a first-grade teacher that she teach her pupils to signal her in this way. She responded positively, expressed agreement with the soundness of the procedure and then, after a pause, said quite spontaneously, "But they'll interrupt the lesson." Then she chuckled as she realized the meaning of her protestation. This teacher's comment informed me that covering or completing "the lesson" had a high priority in her understanding of teaching. Perhaps we could say of this incident that two different understandings of teaching came into contact, hers and mine.

Another implication derived from our second principle is that we must be careful about teaching our learners to agree with us excessively, or to give us what we appear to want. We do this sometimes when we confuse conversations and questions with what are really interrogations. Take for example a preschool advisor who said to the teacher, "Why are those books on a table in the middle of the room instead of in that corner?" I would call this an interrogation because it was a question in which the "right answer" or the appropriate action was given away. I saw another example in which a preschool expert asked a group of college students "what are the three "d's" of

education?" The respondents were quickly informed that the purpose of the question was to uncover what was in the questioner's mind. Surely there is a place for interrogation. Perhaps we want to know whether a young child knows his address and phone number. In such a case we can put it to the child honestly that we want to find out whether he knows it, and then interrogate. While interrogation is useful for some types of assessment and examinations, it may undermine some important aspects of teaching. For example, let us look at the possible consequences of the preschool advisor's interrogation. First of all, the chances are that her question or interrogation reduced the likelihood of subsequent open communication. It is unlikely that in a subsequent encounter the advisee would share with the advisor her confusions and doubts about organizing the room. Indeed, such a question — depending perhaps on the tone of voice and facial expression — is likely to set in motion an adversary relationship between advisor and advisee since the interrogation implies the passing of judgement or a "putting down" rather of the advisee. I do not intend to take issue with the adequacy of the advisor's advice. My major point here is that the advisor's task is to help the advisee to understand or construct the situation more closely to her own understanding or construction. The probability that the advisor could help the advisee improve or refine the advisee's understanding of room arrangements, for instance, would increase if the advisor first uncovered how the advisee understood the situation. Then, with the knowledge thus obtained, the advisor could share with the advisee some insights, concepts or facts which best "match" in J. McV. Hunt's sense of the term (Hunt, 1961 Chapter 7) — the advisor's own understanding. In other words, interrogations inform learners that we know the right or best answers, solutions and ideas. Hopefully so! But it is through conversations in which we probe others' thoughts and ideas, in which we solicit their views, opinions and wishes that we become informed of *another's* understandings of the relevant phenomena. The latter is the crucial step in teaching.

3. *The Principle of Timing in Teaching.* The implications and hypotheses drawn from our second principle lead to a third one which seems to fit into the broad general category of *timing*. Only two aspects of timing can be taken up here. One aspect is the rate at which we respond to learners in teaching-learning encounters. (Perhaps this aspect should be called *pacing*.) I have in mind those frequent encounters in which, for example, a learner reveals an incorrect inappropriate or over-simplified understanding or construction of a given concept or situation. The teacher recognizes the incorrectness of the concept and may offer a correction. The question of concern here is whether there is a "right" or "better" moment in time to offer this correction ? When teaching student teachers we often have such timing decisions to make: we want to balance the rate at which we offer suggestions (which imply things could be going better) with the rate at which we offer encouragement and support (which implies that things are going well — perhaps beyond our fondest hopes and expectations). It is not time, in and of itself, which is at issue. The issue is that learning, change and the development of understandings unfold and occur in time. Certainly all of us make errors in teaching by responding too fast or too slowly. However, it seems a reasonable hypothesis that greater latency, which allows more of the learner's behavior to unfold, increases the quantity of information upon which the teacher can formulate an appropriate response. Perhaps this hypothesis is merely an elaboration of the old-fashioned virtue known as "patience." According to my present understanding of teaching, the virtue of patience resides in the relationship between latency and knowledge of the learner. Hypothetically there are likely to be optimal latencies for every teaching-learning encounter.

A second aspect of our third principle is that no-one enters a social position as a veteran, and that it is useful to think of teachers as having developmental stages with associated concerns and developmental tasks (see Fuller & Bown, 1974; Katz, 1972). In addition to concerns and tasks, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that *understandings* of teaching develop as experience accrues. I would predict and hope, that teachers' understandings of what teaching is "all about" would be less finely and fully differentiated earlier in their careers than they become later on. The differentiation could be expected to increase in such things as the number of levels of analysis and conceptions of the teaching situation (i.e. greater "depth of understanding"), the range of explanations of childrens' behavior, conceptions of institutional processes and functioning and so forth. Presumably the teacher of teachers has a finely differentiated understanding of "what it is all about". Secondly, by proposing the principle of timing I intend to encourage the teacher

educator to take a developmental view of her/his learners (as the learners should of children). The point is to focus on the kind of insight-sharing and information-giving which contributes to the steady but long process of refining understandings. Thus, in our discussions of teacher education as well as early childhood education I suggest that we understand our responsibility more often to be one of helping the learner to develop rather than just to change. Change is easy and can be achieved quickly. Perhaps an extreme example helps to illuminate the difference: just hold a gun to a teacher and you can make his behavior change! But leave after thirty minutes and what endures? The focus on development implies attention to questions of timing over the longer course of modifying, refining and differentiating understandings of phenomena which are important, central, salient or personally significant to the learner.

4. *The Principle of Socio-intellectual Ambience.* Let us assume that every educational program has a characteristic ambience or atmosphere which is perceived by most of the teachers and learners participating in it (see Katz, 1974). Ambience like social climate can be defined as "the feeling tone which expresses something about the feelings generated by the total set of relations between staff and recruits" (Wheeler, 1966). I want to suggest here that the socio-intellectual ambience of our teacher education settings should be congruent with the ambience we want our students to create in early childhood education programs. One of the most important challenges I see facing early childhood educators today is to strengthen the intellectual vitality of the socio-intellectual ambience of both teacher education and early childhood education settings. In teacher education settings this may be achieved when staff members exhibit their concern, curiosity and involvement in the disciplines relevant to education. Intellectual vitality may be supported and strengthened when staff members engage their students in activities by which they try to advance the conceptual and knowledge base of the field of early childhood education. From my observations of early childhood programs in several countries I have the impression that we are not providing activities and experiences of the kind children can get their intellectual "teeth" into. Children seem to be dabbling in a wide variety of activities which seem pleasant enough. In other programs children are engaged in many routine academic tasks which also lack intellectual vitality. I see a major goal of early childhood education to help children make sense of their experiences and environments. In other words, we are responsible for helping young children to develop, refine, improve or deepen their understandings of the salient features of their day-to-day lives. The intellectual vitality of our programs can be strengthened when we encourage and help children to reconstruct these salient features.

This can be achieved by building and making some features, by dramatizing others, and by observing, recounting, recalling, recording or discussing their perceptions and understandings of their experiences. I have a hunch that for this goal to be more fully realized, children in early childhood education programs will have to have stronger attachments to the teaching adults and that in general the relationships between adults and children must be characterized by greater intensity than they typically are now. Strength of attachment has to do with adults' usefulness as models as well as sources of demands, support and encouragement. Intensity has to do with the role of concentration in teaching and learning. In my own teaching experience I find that the process of uncovering students' understandings of relevant phenomena requires my full concentration on the unfolding events in the teaching situations.

Since we cannot "cover" everything we want our learners to know, we must try to teach in such a way as to increase the likelihood that our learners will go on learning. In other words our teaching should be such as to strengthen the *disposition to be a learner*. Those of us who teach teachers are responsible for helping our students to become life-long students of their own teaching. Some students learn what we have to teach them by the explanations we give; some learn from the examples and illustrations we share; some learn from the model we provide, and some learn from all three of these aspects of our teaching. If indeed we observe the first principle and teach in ways which are congruent with the ways we hope our students will approach young children, we may measure up to some of our most urgent challenges.

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THE HOME START PROGRAM IN THE U.S.A.

Dr. Ruth Ann O'Keefe,
National Director, Home Start, and Visiting
Senior Lecturer, Early Childhood Program,
Macquarie University.

I deeply appreciate the honour of being invited to address your First Annual Conference of the Australian Association of Early Childhood Educators.

The topic I was asked to talk with you about is Home Start — a program dear to my heart because of my close involvement with it from its very beginnings in the U.S. nearly four years ago.

But before I begin to describe Home Start to you, I want to set it in context, in perspective. Home Start is an integral part of Head Start; and, as most of you are well aware, Head Start is the pre-school child development program for children from low-income homes, begun almost exactly 10 years ago. But Head Start was by no means just an early education program. It was outstanding because it embodied what we came to call "a *comprehensive*" approach to the early childhood years — not just education, but health, social services for child and family, and parent involvement. Some of the early evaluations of Head Start unfortunately focused mainly on the education component — children's cognitive development and sustained school achievement in the early school years — and they found, for a variety of reasons, I'm sure, that while Head Start children made measured and measurable gains during the program and shortly following it, these educational gains were usually lost by the time the child had completed third grade. But the impacts of the health, social services and parent components were not well-assessed, or well-reported, and only recently are we beginning to see the impact, and appreciate the values, in these areas. Fortunately, our Congress has recognised the merits of Head Start from its very beginnings, for Head Start is one of the few programs of its kind which has had increased rather than decreased funding.

When I left the United States, two months ago, for example, Head Start had just been re-funded for another three years.

We do not have time today to explore even the major threads in the U.S. that have contributed to Head Start, or affected it, or been affected by it; nor can we discuss Head Start's evaluations. But in order to begin to understand Home Start, we must mention a very important aspect of thinking in America regarding child development programs. Because of the diverse needs, interests, concerns, and even preferences of American parents and communities, there is an unwillingness to have just *one* kind of child development program. You have the same considerations here — in my brief stay so far, for example, I have already seen active playgroups, family day care programs, half- and full-day preschool programs, and home visiting programs — in short, program designs suited to your individual families and communities.

In the U.S., there is a strong resistance to seeking *the* answer, *the* best program — but rather, there are continual searches for feasible solutions — feasible programs to fill particular needs.

So it was that several years ago, the policy-makers in Head Start took a long, hard look at Head Start policies and found that sometimes these policies made it difficult for programs to respond to local needs. For example, one policy stated that all Head Start programs must provide at least 16 hours a week of *classroom* experience for all children enrolled. Yet, there were many parents and communities who wanted to have young children — say age 3 — to come only a couple of hours twice a week, or to have staff go out into homes to work with children and their parents in the home setting. These and other considerations encouraged Head Start to develop its Options Policy — a policy which stimulates the

development of a *diversity* of ways to meet early childhood development needs.

Home Start was one of several such Program Options — and it was highly visible because it was quite a different *way* of carrying out a program; it takes the Program into the Home, and helps parents do with their children in their own home, many of the same things Head Start teachers do with children in Head Start centers. Other options for the most part concerned length of time in program, or age of child, rather than nature of program.

The various Options, however, did not dilute the major, basic tenets of Head Start, so that all programs were still required to have an education component, a social service component, a parent (or parent involvement) component, and a health component, which was to include physical and mental health, dental health, and nutrition.

Thus Home Start, as one of the Head Start program options, grew out of an increasing awareness of the importance of the role of parents in the education and development of their own children and — just as powerful — an increasing *desire* by many parents to have guidance and support in strengthening their parental role.

Home Start began as a demonstration program so that we could evaluate its feasibility — after all, program options should have merit to them, lest children lose out by their participation. (Another way of saying this, perhaps, is that it is not so important to determine the best program — we need to know "best" for whom and under what conditions — but rather to develop a *variety* of sound programs from which choices can be sensibly and safely made).

There were 16 Home Start programs in a wide variety of cultural and geographical settings — urban, rural, black, white, Indian, Spanish, Oriental, Alaskan — and each had about 80 families enrolled. All programs were part of an extensive evaluation program, because one of the major purposes of the demonstration was to obtain information on the benefits, processes and costs of such a program.

You may be interested to know that now, well over 200 of the 1,200 Head Start programs have adopted or adapted some of the Home Start concepts, and there is indication that even more will do so in the near future. Often, these Head Start programs are not *eliminating* their centre-based activities, but rather reducing them, while adding increased contact and work with parents.

I should mention just briefly that the Home Start evaluation findings gathered over the past three years have been favourable, and provide "convincing evidence that a parent-focused, home-based child development program can be a viable alternative delivery system producing outcomes at least comparable to those produced by a Head Start centre-based program."

THE HOME START EVALUATION: HIGHLIGHTS OF FINDINGS*

A. Introduction

The Office of Child Development (OCD) bears responsibility for many programs designed to benefit young children. Principal among those programs is Head Start, transferred to OCD in 1969 from the Office of Economic Opportunity.

In 1972, OCD funded Home Start as a Head Start demonstration program. Although Head Start has always emphasized the importance of the role of parents in the development of their own children, this emphasis was high-lighted in the Home Start program. Based to a large extent upon the prior research and experience of a number of earlier parent-focused child development programs, Home Start was specifically designed to enhance the quality of children's lives by building upon existing family strengths and by emphasizing the role of parents as the first and most important influence in the growth and development of their own children. Like Head Start, Home Start primarily serves 3-5 year old children from income-eligible families and has the same basic program components: education, social services, parent involvement, and health services, which include medical, dental, mental health, and nutrition.

Concurrently with the initiation of the Home Start demonstration, OCD contracted with the

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* Excerpted and abstracted from: Deloria, D., Coelen, C., and Ruopp, R., **National Home Start Evaluation: Interim Report V, Executive Summary**, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation and Abt Associates, Inc., October 15, 1974.

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation and Abt Associates to conduct a major Home Start evaluation project running parallel with the demonstration program.

The research design, carefully developed by OCD, has focused on the effects of Home Start on children and mothers. Through over-recruitment it was possible to randomly select families for Home Start and for a control group not in Home Start at each of six "summative" research sites. Random selection is vital to the clear interpretation of outcome differences, but it is seldom used in large evaluations of this kind because it is so difficult to carry out.

In addition to outcome data (effects), the design required collection of data on the home visits (process), the local project staff and families (inputs), and project budgets (cost).

B. Home Start Program Overview

Home Start is a program for disadvantaged preschool children and their families which is funded by the Office of Child Development, Office of Human Development, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The program began in March of 1972 and was funded for a 3½-year demonstration period. Home Start is a home-based program providing Head Start-type comprehensive services (education, social services, parent involvement, and health — which includes medical, dental, and mental health, nutrition, and safety) to low-income families with 3-5 year old children. A home-based program provides services in the family home rather than in a center setting.

A unique feature of Home Start is that it builds upon existing family strengths and assists parents in their role as the first and most important educators of their own children.

The Home Start program has four major objectives, as stated in the national Home Start *Guidelines* (December 1971):

- to involve parents directly in the educational development of their children;
- to help strengthen in parents their capacity for facilitating the general development of their own children;
- to demonstrate methods of delivering comprehensive Head Start-type services to children and parents (or substitute parents) for whom a center-based program is not feasible;
- to determine the relative costs and benefits of center- and home-based comprehensive early childhood development programs, especially in areas where both types of programs are feasible.

Presently 16 Home Start programs, funded by the Office of Child Development, are in operation. Each program receives approximately $100,000 with which to serve 80 families for a 12-month period. Participating families come from a wide variety of locales and many different ethnic and cultural backgrounds — including white, black, urban, rural, Appalachian, Eskimo, Native American, migrants, Spanish-speaking, and Oriental.

Home Start program staff consist primarily of "home visitors" who visit the homes of enrolled families once or twice a week. In addition to working with the mother on matters of child development, the home visitors discuss nutrition, health, and social and psychological needs of family members. When needed, home visitors or other program staff refer families to community agencies for specialized services.

Families enrolled in Home Start also participate in group activities or meetings on specific topics, such as parent effectiveness or health. Each program has a policy-making council, which includes Home Start parents as members, to set policy for the local Home Start project.

Further information on the Home Start program can be found in:

> *The Home Start Demonstration Program: An overview*, (February, 1973), Office of Child Development. This booklet acquaints the reader with the overall Home Start program as well as introducing the 16 individual projects.
>
> *A Guide for Planning and Operating Home-Based Child Development Programs*, (June, 1974), Office of Child Development. Based on the 16 Home Start projects, this guide details what is involved in planning and operating a home-based child development program.

C. Home Start Evaluation Overview

The National Home Start Evaluation incorporates three distinct components: the

formative evaluation, the summative evaluation, and the information system. The three are complementary ways of viewing the effects of Home Start. While all sites participate in the formative evaluation and information system, only six, selected as being representative of the rest of the programs, are involved in the summative evaluation.

1. *Formative Evaluation*

The formative evaluation provides basic descriptive information about key aspects of individual Home Start projects. This information is used to give feedback about project implementation and to establish a context for the statistical and analytical findings. Elements of the formative evaluation include project-by-project case studies, observation of home visits, analysis of staff time-use patterns, and development of cost models. Trained interviewers gathered formative data by visiting each of the 16 projects to interview staff and to review project records. They visited the six summative sites each fall and spring, and visited the remaining 10 sites each spring.

2. *Summative Evaluation*

The summative evaluation provides information about Home Start's overall effectiveness by measuring changes in parents and children. Three features characterize this kind of evaluation in the Home Start program. First, there are "before-and-after" measurements of parent and child performance along criteria provided in the Home Start *Guidelines*. Measures used for the evaluation include:

- Preschool Inventory
- Denver Development Screening Test (DDST)
- Schaefer Behavior Inventory
- High/Scope Home Environment Scale
- 8-Block Sort Task (which includes a "Child Talk Score")
- Parent Interview
- Child Food Intake Questionnaire
- Height and Weight Measures
- Pupil Observation Checklist
- Mother Behavior Observation Scale

Second, there is a randomly assigned, delayed-entry "control" group who did not enter the Home Start program until after they participated in one complete cycle of fall and spring testing. Outcomes for these control families, who had not yet experienced Home Start, were compared to outcomes for Home Start families who had received full benefits. Control families are receiving a full year of Home Start benefits now that their "control" year is finished.

Third, some comparison data were gathered from children (and their families) enrolled in center-based Head Start programs at four sites. Thus, comparisons could be made involving samples of Home Start, control, and Head Start (center-based) children, and an examination could be made of the dual hypotheses that (1) Home Start can stimulate gains in children comparable to gains made by children in center-based Head Start programs and (2) children participating in either Home Start or Head Start achieve at a higher level than control children who have not been enrolled in a preschool intervention program.

Before-and-after measurements have been collected from the six summative sites each October and May. Local programs were given a full year to become operative, during which time the summative evaluation was limited to a pilot tryout of procedures. Data from the second year are presented in *Interim Report V*, which is referenced in the footnote on page 1. The data were gathered by locally hired community interviewers who received special training twice each year.

3. *Information System*

An information system, designed to gather basic statistics about each of the 16 programs, forms the third component of the national evaluation. Information is gathered quarterly on family and staff characteristics, services provided to families, and program financial expenditures. These statistics are needed to help local and national staff make better administrative decisions, to assist in the interpretation of summative evaluation outcomes, and to serve as input to the cost-effectiveness analysis of the Home Start program. The necessary information is gathered by local program staff members as part of their routine record-keeping activities; then the information is summarized into quarterly reports which are sent to national staff.

4. *Previous Evaluation Reports*

Further information on the national Home Start evaluation can be found in reports prepared for the Office of Child Development by

the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation and Abt Associates, Inc. The following Home Start evaluation reports are available through the *ERIC* system:

- Interim Report I (August, 1972)
  1. Formative and Summative Evaluation (ED 069 439)
  1.A. Case Studies (ED 069 440)
  1.B. Case Studies (ED 069 441)
- Interim Report II (July, 1973)
  Program Analysis (ED 091 074)
  Summative Evaluation Results (ED 085 398)
  Case Studies IIA (ED 091 081)
  Case Studies IIB (ED 092 225)
- Interim Report III (August, 1973)
  Evaluation Plan 1973-1974 (ED 092 227)
  Program Analysis (ED 092 226)
  Summative Evaluation Results (ED 092 229)
  Case Study Summaries (ED 092 228)
- Interim Report IV (May, 1974; not yet in the ERIC system)
  Program Analysis
  Summative Evaluation Results
  Field Procedures Manual

Each report is based on a 6-month interval of data collection. Early reports (I, II, III) focus on the initial planning and pilot stages of the evaluation. Later reports (IV, V) present pretest and 7-month posttest results of the formal evaluation stage. Upcoming reports VI and VII will follow up Home Start families at 12- and 18-month posttest times.

D. Highlights of Findings

In general, Home Start evaluation findings to date provide convincing evidence that a parent-focused, home-based child development program can be a viable alternative delivery system producing outcomes at least comparable to those produced by a Head Start center-based program. The first pre-post findings cover a seven-month program period and indicate that in general Home Start children made gains comparable to those of Head Start children, and both Home Start and Head Start children made many statistically significant gains over the randomly selected control group. The only disappointing findings were that about 10% of the Home Start children had not yet received their full series of age-appropriate immunizations, and the diets of the Home Start children continued to appear deficient in certain important nutrients.

Selected details of the findings follow.

1. *Overall Program Description*

As of October 1, 1974, there were 1,150 families enrolled in the 16 projects. These families had 2,220 children in the 0-5 age range, 1,443 of whom were "focal" children in the 3-5 age range.

Of the 179 total staff members, 114 were home visitors.

Between October 1973 and May 1974 OCD expenditures for each Home Start family averaged $896. Projected to a 12-month period, these expenditures would be about $1,344 on the average for each family, roughly comparable to the cost of center-based programs. About 75% of Home Start program budgets generally go to personnel costs, including consultants, such as for medical services. Of the remaining 25%, typically, or on average, about 6% goes to travel, 5% to space, 9% to consumable supplies, and 2% to equipment.

2. *Program Effectiveness: Home Start Compared with Control Group*

The effectiveness, or "program outcome" measures are based on a 7-month period. That is, pretesting was done in the Fall of 1973 and posttesting was done 7 months later in the Spring of 1974.

- With regard to the *mother-child relationship*, the two "mother self-report" measures showed statistically significant differences in favor of Home Start mothers. These measures were the High/Scope Home Environment Mother Involvement Scale, which measures how often mothers spend time with their children in games, conversation and other activities children like, and the High/Scope Home Environment Household Tasks Scale, which measures how often children "help" their mothers with some simple household tasks. (This measure is intended to reflect how much the child is integrated into the mother's daily activities.)

Home Start mothers also reported teaching

significantly more elementary or readiness reading and writing skills to their children than control mothers. In addition, there were significantly more stimulating materials (books and play things) in Home Start homes than in control homes.

- In *"school readiness"* the Home Start children gained significantly more than the control children on three of the four school readiness measures, including:

  -- the Preschool Inventory, measure of children's achievement in skill areas that are commonly regarded as necessary for success in school

  -- the Denver Developmental Screening Test (DDST) Language Scale, a measure of children's ability to understand spoken language and to respond verbally

  -- the 8-Block Child Talk Score, a measure of how many task-related comments children make while mothers teach them to sort four kinds of blocks into groups

  -- Gains on the fourth measure, the 8-Block Sort Task, which tested children's ability to acquire abstract concepts taught by by the mother, favored the Home Start children but were not statistically significant.

- In *social-emotional development* there were no statistically significant differences between Home Start and control children, except on a Task Orientation Scale, which is part of the Schaefer Behavior Inventory. The Task Orientation Scale measures the child's ability to become involved in tasks for extended periods of time. Results favored the Home Start children in this task.

  This lack of difference between Home Start and control is, of course, not necessarily a negative finding, especially considering the 7-month period. In addition, children's social-emotional growth is very difficult to measure with available tests, and lack of differences may be due to imprecise techniques.

- In *physical development* Home Start children gained statistically more weight than control children; while this indicates change, it does not indicate improvement in eating patterns. Children in both Home Start and control groups were, on average, below national norms for both weight and height.

- For *medical care*, significant improvements were observed from Home Start children in comparison with control children. More Home Start children had seen a physician more recently for preventive reasons, and 89% had seen a dentist, compared to only 17% of control children. However about 10% of Home Start children had not yet received all their essential immunizations.

- In *nutrition*, there was no improvement in total nutrition scores among Home Start children compared to control children. No increase was found in the number of children taking vitamin supplements. Children's diets appeared deficient in calcium, vitamin A, riboflavin, and vitamin C. The report states, "This problem should be viewed as one of utmost urgency."

3. *Program Effectiveness: Home Start — Head Start*

With only a few exceptions, Home Start children kept pace with Head Start children over this 7-month period. The major differences between the two groups were in the areas of *nutrition, immunizations, day care,* and *"things mothers teach their children"*. With regard to the first three, Head Start children fared significantly better on the nutrition food in-take measure, had more immunizations, and received day care services; and in the last, Home Start children fared significantly better than Head Start (that is, Home Start mothers did more "teaching" to their own children than Head Start mothers). Thus, the report states, "For the most part, then, Home Start can be viewed as delivering services which are comparable to those in the Head Start program."

E. Next Steps

OCD is now completing the Home Start demonstration program and collecting evaluation data to assess both one-year and two-year program effects. Tentative plans call for a follow-up evaluation of a sample of Home Start children into their early school years.

The development and dissemination of guidance materials to assist others interested in home-based programs will be intensified. A significant part of OCD's dissemination effort will be a National Conference on Home-Based Child Development Programs to be held in March, 1975. The purpose of this Conference

will be to share experiences and knowledge gained by Home Start and related programs and thus to assist Head Start, schools, and other child development programs in planning and implementing strategies which emphasize the role of parents.

Finally, OCD will provide guidance, training, and technical support to home-based programs through several cross-regional facilities whose purpose will be to assist in efforts related to home-based programs.

The child development community has responded enthusiastically to the concepts embodied in Home Start, and OCD will make every possible effort to provide to those interested the guidance and assistance necessary for the planning and operation of quality home-based comprehensive child development programs.

F. For Further Information

Further information on the Home Start program or the evaluation can be obtained from Dr. Ann O'Keefe, who has been the national director of Home Start since its beginning, and from Dr. Ester Kresh, the Project Officer for the evaluation. Their address is:

Office of Child Development
Office of Human Development
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

EARLY CHILDHOOD TRAINING PROGRAMS

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Most — if not all — of this audience is concerned with educating or advising people whose actions have an impact on young children, i.e. people in the role of parent, in the role we label "teacher", or in the role of policy-maker. If you wonder about my putting "teacher" in inverted commas, it reflects my increasing feeling that the word is used in so many different ways that it is a sure route to problems in communication. At the least, I have come to feel, like Lewis Carroll, that a word with so many meanings should be paid double!

My own concern today is to describe a particular training program, namely, the one given this year at Macquarie University. The explicit goal of this program — first suggested by the Fry Committee, and funded by the Interim Committee of the Children's Commission — is to enhance the skills of people who already have some commitment to the area of early childhood and who appear likely to have a "ripple" effect in 1976, i.e. appear likely to influence others.

Describing one particular program may seem to you a far cry from the overall issues in training for the early childhood area. This is really not so. It is true that this year's program is a "special" (in Macquarie terms, an "ad hoc" course.) The issues we have faced, however, are issues that come up in any form of education for people working with young children — the issue, for example, of who should do what? And how do you know they have the skills to do it?

In addition, describing Macquarie's program has the advantage of answering questions we are often asked. This year's program, with its special funding, explicitly recognizes the importance of working with young children — an area often regarded as low in priority and prestige. This year's program is also part of a new emphasis on accountability in education. On both counts, it is only reasonable that we should face the questions that more and more of you are facing, namely: What are you trying to do? And how are you trying to do it?

One most general objective is the one already mentioned: a "ripple" effect in 1976. This ripple effect, as we see it, may take several forms. One is a direct training role. For example, in 1976 a number of the participants will be offering courses for people working towards a degree or diploma in early childhood education: face-to-face courses, complete courses, bridging, conversion and end-on courses, all within the setting of a University or a College of Advanced Education. We are told, for instance, that 1976 may see 32 training programs of this kind in Australia, in contrast to 6 available a few years ago. Alternatively, the direct training role may take the form of courses offered to paraprofessionals (e.g. Child Care Associates), or to parents and parents-to-be. At the moment, the setting for these latter courses is not as clear, and the impetus towards them seems less strong, than is the case for courses specifically leading to certification as a teacher. If Australia proceeds as other countries have, however, the demand for such additional forms of direct training will increase in the future, and the settings within which they are offered will diversify. I would expect to see, for example, courses for Child Care Associates or Child Care Certificates offered both within Technical Colleges and Colleges of Advanced Education.

A direct training role in 1976, however, is not the only form a ripple effect may take. A second is in the form of a catalyst or facilitator role. There is a tremendous need within Australia for people in the area of early childhood to become aware of one another's existence and to develop effective ways in which various groups can cooperate: parent groups, community groups, school groups, baby health centres, teacher educators, political groups, etc.

Two final forms of effect I have come to call "resource" and "modelling" roles. Whatever our participants do in 1976, we hope they will serve as useful sources of information with regard to what's happening in the area of early childhood. In addition, we hope they will, by their own actions and their own proposals, serve as models of open-mindedness and flexibility, reflecting the general premise on

which the program was based. This premise may be stated in a single phrase, namely: "there is seldom only *one* right way", or, more positively, "there is *always* more than one way".

I would like at this point to counter any idea that each of these roles has a separate setting, e.g. the training role limited to Colleges, the facilitator or catalyst role to communities. Nothing could be further from the truth. We cannot conveniently divide the world into separate areas: school here, family there, community in another little box, and policy-makers in another. Theoretically, none of these settings exist in a vacuum, and our training should not encourage this illusion of isolation. Practically, no one in the area of early childhood can live out the kind of enclosed or sheltered existence that separateness implies; at least, not if they wish to remain effective. It is true that the majority of the people in the Macquarie program will be working within Colleges of Advanced Education. I hope that future will not be held against them. It is also true that the majority of them have some form of tertiary training already: diplomas from a Kindergarten or Nursery Teachers' College, degrees in social work or other content areas, certificates in nursing; — I hope none of those qualifications will be held against them. Whatever their background and their future setting, however, they must all expect to play a variety of roles, to be able to serve as educator, coordinator, advisor, facilitator, catalyst, researcher. For those of you who wish to explore that point further, I would strongly recommend Millie Almy's new book — The Early Childhood Educator at Work. By "early childhood educator", Almy means a person whose role "extends beyond the classroom, to provide support to teachers and to parents (p. 261)." Among the early childhood educators, she continues, "some are classroom teachers, but teachers with profound knowledge of children and deep respect for parents, and skill in working with other adults. Others are known as directors, consultants, or coordinators. Titles do not matter (pp. 260-261)." What does matter is "the depth of their insight . . . the breadth of their knowledge (p. 261)," and their capacity "to feel for and with others as distinct from going through the motions of doing for others (p. 261)."

What are we doing to prepare the Macquarie participants for these various types of ripple effect, for these diverse roles? Let me briefly outline some of the steps. Some refer to areas you might expect to encounter in a number of programs: areas such as child development, curriculum, the nature of the family, and the community area. Others are less often encountered. These have an explicit link to the expected role of our program, and I shall describe them first.

For all areas, I would like first to make explicit one recurring feature. We are trying not to repeat areas of strength that already exist, but to fit ourselves to what Ann O'Keefe so positively terms "areas of lesser strength". In part, our continuing assessment of "lesser strengths" is based on an increasing knowledge of the participants and their statements about what they want. It is also based on an assessment of what we see as areas of concern on the general Australian scene. So, if I seem to stress such points as open-mindedness, co-operation, caution in the use of labels, pragmatism, and a willingness to look carefully at where we are going, I intend no slur on the Macquarie participants. They are not uniquely short of these virtues, any more than all of us human beings are.

Some Special Features

The most immediate of these is the *diversity* of the participants, the staff, and the invited speakers. The participants vary in educational and geographical background; they vary also in age and experience; and they vary in their beliefs about what is needed in order to provide a good life for young children and their parents. It is this diversity — and the thoughtfulness behind many of the beliefs — that I find especially interesting and worthwhile. In effect, we have 52 resource people right on one spot. We have begun to make use of their expertise as lecturers and content organizers, and I often feel we will do well if the only thing we achieve is an effective sharing of what these 52 people already know and feel. In addition, we have a diversity of staff. You have already heard from Lilian Katz and Ann O'Keefe. Also involved are Ailsa Burns, Maureen Fegan, Faye Pettit, Robin Porter, Di Grafton, Lewis Crabtree, and myself. It would be burdensome to attach specific names to particular content areas but, briefly, we cover child development, teacher education, community needs, parent programs, evaluation studies, and an assortment of other areas. Finally, we have a diversity of invited speakers — "external staff"; these range through leaders of playgroups, parents of children with special

needs, psychiatrists, political policy-makers, and organizers of courses in early childhood education.

In addition to diversity of exposure, we are offering units dealing with some specific skills. To list some:

(1) *Analyses of training programs* — and of major issues in any form of training. Towards this goal, we have begun a collection of various programs or syllabuses, so that people can acquire a clear sense of how things are done, and as well, a clear sense of both constraints and possibilities. In a sense, that is advance notice that we may well ask you for material describing what you are doing. I myself feel that materials are not lock-and-key items, but potential models. There is little to be gained by an exact imitation; but there is a lot to be gained by thinking about what you can offer that represents both a solid and a unique contribution. We hope, in return, to produce some "take-away" items describing various resources and we shall be happy to distribute these at the end of the year, together with a complete description of all we have covered.

(2) *Knowledge of some specific approaches* to training, e.g. micro-teaching, and competency-based programs. The Macquarie participants have mixed feelings about micro-teaching at this point, and they have yet to grapple with competency-based programs. Both approaches, however are ways of surfacing some major questions: What are the properties or dimensions of effective teaching, or effective care-giving? Is there some way of defining the skills required in terms other than 1, 2, or 3 years of training? We all know that some people need less training than others, while for other people, even 3 years is insufficient. Is there some way in which we can define the needed skills and assess whether people already have some of these to start with? For "mature-aged" people, or people with experience, this is an especially important question.

(3) *Some specific skills* e.g. minicourses in small-group or tutorial techniques, lecturing skills, audio-visual techniques, tertiary team teaching. The first two of these have been taken by all participants; the latter (plus some additional mini-courses) are being offered as electives. For these mini-courses, we have been fortunate in being able to draw on the expertise of the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and various members of the Teacher Education Program at Macquarie.

(4) *An awareness of some general issues*, i.e. issues that recur in any program for staff development, any program for educating care-givers whether these are parents or people working towards a diploma or degree. These issues include topics such as knowing who one's clients are; making decisions about time, place, and content; preparing for follow-through or carry-over; and — most important — aspects of gaining approval and funding.

Areas of Special Content

Many of our course participants have already considerable knowledge in the various content areas. Our goal is to widen and enhance the knowledge and skills already present. I have chosen five content areas to comment briefly on: 1. Child Development; 2. Curriculum; 3. Provisions for Young Children; 4. Objectives, evaluations and philosophies; 5. Sociological and comparative contexts.

Area 1: Child development and its implications

The emphasis is on areas where recent work has changed concepts and practices. For example:

(a) In early development (ages 0-24 months);

(b) In Language development and use;

(c) In "prosocial" development (i.e. not simply the avoidance of aggression but the active development of tolerance and cooperation);

(d) In sex role typing (a topic that captures the essence of many aspects of socialization). We have not yet looked formally at this topic but it has already come up in a number of discussions, and we have all begun to acquire the first rule — watch your language! All children, for instance, are not "he's", and all parents are not "she's". My own language — as you may note — leans towards the liberal use of plurals ("they" as well as "him" or "her") and of generic terms such as "people".

(e) Effects of "modelling" (a topic that comes back to the question: how are behaviours learned? What is the "power of example" — its strengths and limits?

(f) The use of norms in development: what tests are available? And how can they be used effectively and with discretion? One of my own biasses in this area is towards

the technique Genevieve Painter uses in "Teach Your Baby" (a technique of having people first understand the nature of a progression rather than know only the months or years when different behaviours generally occur). A second bias is towards the point made by Sally Provence: what counts is not simply whether children display certain behaviours or skills in a testing situation, but also whether they use these skills and behaviours in everyday life. This emphasis alerts us to "test-wise" children who nonetheless do not cope well. It also alerts us to "test-shy" children and pushes us in the direction of caution in reliance on tests, and — an alternative direction — an active concern with listening to parents' reports and observing children in a natural context.

I would not like to leave the impression that these specific areas of child development form a set of small islands. They are areas in which a great deal of recent work has been done. In addition, however, they — along with many other areas — are united by a recurring question: what are our underlying concepts of what children are like? Our decisions about children, on a day-to-day basis or on a once-a-year policy basis, are only partially based on research data. They are heavily influenced, however, by our general images or models of children. Do we, as a group or as individuals, see them as innately wise and creative, needing only affection and acceptance in order to unfold? Or do we see them as blanks ready to be written upon, empty vessels ready to be filled? Or do we see them as needing specific help and careful guidance in order to counter their natural weaknesses? In the area of cognitive development, do we see them as by nature curious and creative or in need of encouragement in order to explore and innovate?

Such general models or assumptions about "the way people are" — either as children or as adults — have powerful effects on our decisions. I think we have to know our own assumptions, recognize that they are not always shared, and continually ask: Does this general picture apply to this particular child in this particular context? I would like to suggest that we adopt the same questioning attitude towards the assumption that "earlier is better", substituting instead the question: When is earlier better? And what is the evidence?

Area 2: Curriculum — Issues and Current Trends

We plan here to cover general issues, e.g. on what basis can one distinguish and choose between various curricula? I will again be frank about my own bias (one supported in this case by some research studies, c.f. Lillie, 1975). As you might expect, I do not consider that there is any one curriculum package that is ideal for all children, all communities, and all educators. What you do need to do, however, is to know your children and their community — parents and schools — as well as possible. You need to become explicit about your own objectives, both long-term and short-term. You also need to give some thought to the choice you make. And finally, you need to be careful not to settle into the conviction that you have discovered the one right way that will remain right forever. I have vivid memories, for example, of a first-grade teacher who assured me that the "look-and-say" method in teaching reading had worked "perfectly" for her for over 13 years, happily ignoring the unfortunate group who every year were referred to special classes over the summer, where they learned phonics. I hold no brief for one method versus another, but I would like to see a willingness to see what works with one child rather than a rigid conviction that one method is perfect and any problems are attributable to the child's "immaturity". I feel sure that no one here would be so one-eyed or so rigid.

We also plan to look at specific content areas: music; creative movement; drama; number skills; literature; reading and "pre-reading" skills. Fortunately, among the participants themselves are several people with specialist skills in some of these areas. They have already organized, for example, an excellent overview of a number of current trends in music and creative movement. Our hope, over the year, is an overview of specific areas for all participants, and time for a more intensive look at some as an elective.

Area 3: Providing for Young Children: What's Happening? What's Available?

In this area we have again drawn on a great deal of committee and organizational work by the course participants. We have just finished, for example, a first look at programs and projects of various kinds: "centre-based", "home-based", "media-based", "teacher-directed", or "parent-directed", offered for all or responding to some individual differences in background, ability, or need. We are in no sense

aiming at a complete listing of projects and programs — that would take years and would be out of date by the time we had finished — but we do wish to gain a sense of what's happening and — most important — an awareness of the major issues involved in various settings.

It is the issues that we ourselves have still to grapple with more closely. Some that have emerged are as follows:

(a) How can we bring about cooperation and mutual respect among caregivers? We need both more information about what other people are doing, and more recognition of the fact that they often have a great deal to contribute.

(b) How do we prepare for follow-through or carry-over? Many of the arrangements we make for young children are dependent — for any impact or for maximal impact — on someone else following-through, either at home or in the primary school. How can we help people recognize the need for follow-through, plan for it, and find out whether it actually happens?

(c) What are the bases on which we — as parents, educators, or policy-makers — can make a choice between one setting and another? Between one form of staffing and another? In part, this means coming to terms with constraints of time, money, personnel, and government or council regulations.

It also means facing up to some of the questions that recur in looking at curricula, namely:

(a) What are our objectives? What are we trying to do? Are these objectives the same as those held by others: children, parents, communities, policy-makers?

(b) How can we determine whether these objectives have been met? These questions, especially in an era of "accountability", are so important and so pervasive that we plan to make them an area of their own.

Area 4. Objectives, Evaluations and Philosophies

I know it seems as if each time I mention a topic, the question of objectives turns up. It is really not as frightening a term as it seems to be for some people in the early childhood field. We all have objectives, whether we call them "goals", "aims", "concerns", etc. The need exists, however, to make them explicit and to present them in a form that makes it possible to ask whether they have been met, and whether they are shared. In these days of funding and evaluation, more and more people are asking about objectives and the danger exists, if you do not state your own, that other people will assume you have none or will write some for you. Within the Macquarie program, we hope that the participants will become less shy of terms like "objectives", will come to distinguish between short-term and long-term goals, and will come to look for relationships between objectives and what is done. We hope that they will become more specific than saying their objective is the "development of the whole child" or "the improvement of conditions for the working mother". At the same time, we hope they will not forget such simple — and measurable — objectives as the physical safety of children, parental satisfaction with a program, and children's satisfaction with a program. Basically, we want people to try to sort out their own priorities, to recognize and accept the fact that these priorities may not be the same as those held by others, and to start asking how some form of cooperation or compromise can be reached.

Evaluation is the other side of the "objectives" coin. It may be informal or formal; you may carry out your own or someone else may do it for you. It need not always be the high-powered, large-scale, super-statistical beast that many seem to think it is. Knowing how to read the reports of highly technical evaluations is a skill we hope some of our participants will develop. Thinking in terms of whether one achieved what one intended, however, is an attitude and a skill we hope to see develop in all of them. So also is an increasing alertness to the need to look carefully at evaluation programs, with an eye to asking whether the measures used are appropriate to the original objectives.

We have added the term "philosophies" to this area because we wish to look at some of the "imponderables" in setting up objectives and evaluations. Since we could spend the whole year on this question, however, we hope to bring it into focus somewhat by some specific sub-topics. One of these is a topic dealing with the "roles" or "styles" that people see themselves as playing, and do play — e.g. we shall ask whether pre-school teachers act and perceive themselves as playing primarily a "maternal", "therapeutic", or "instructional" role — to use some of Lilian Katz' terms (Katz, 1970). In effect, we shall be concerned with what educators believe they are doing, and with

developing ways of observing what is actually done.

The other way in which we hope to bring "philosophies" down to a manageable bite is incorporated into Area 5 — the last I plan to talk about.

Area 5. Sociological, historical and comparative contexts

For myself, I find a reading of past provisions for young children the quickest route to tolerance. We have been in the past so sure that some particular approach was the answer to all our problems. We have also been amazingly flexible — during World War II, for example — in the way we were prepared to shuffle priorities. Within this year, we do not expect to cover the complete range of alternatives but we do hope to gain some sense of what has happened locally as well as overseas. Reading about a Kibbutz or a Chinese Kindergarten is extremely useful. It helps dispel the illusion of the one universal right way. But reading about changes in one's own society is a lot closer to home. For myself, for example, I am intrigued by half-day vs. full-day programs. Is the provision of one rather than the other based on evidence about differential effects, or on the more political goal of offering something for everyone?

Equally intriguing is the question: how far is the extension of pre-school services after World War II based on the middle-class seeing how important kindergarten was, or on the decline in the availability of domestic help? (c.f. Spearritt, 1974).

A knowledge of context, we feel, will widen the vision of people in the early childhood area. In effect, it provides another route towards the general goals of tolerance and of more effective thinking. We should progress, I feel, beyond empty battles about "care" *versus* "education", "child-minding" *versus* "schooling", "certified teachers" *versus* "the rest". There is an enormously large job to be done, and we are not going to do it unless we begin to think clearly and pull together.

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INITIATIVES BEING TAKEN IN THE E.C.E. FIELD BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Joan Fry
Permanent Member, Interim Committee for the Children's Commission

In order to place in perspective the initiatives being taken by the Australian Government in the area of early childhood education it seems necessary to look at some initiatives taken by the previous Governments.

The first evidence of interest was apparent when the Commonwealth Government in 1939 established a pre-school centre in each State capital to undertake a five year research study into child health and concurrently to demonstrate proper programmes for pre-school education.

These centres known as Lady Gowrie Child Centres were financed by the Department of Health. Administration was delegated to a recently founded national association of Kindergarten Unions known as the Australian Association for Pre-School Child Development and more recently as the Australian Pre-School Association.

This organisation operating under a grant from the Federal Government employed a professional officer to co-ordinate the work of the Gowrie Centres and to bring together the voluntary agencies responsible for their administration within each State.

For the first time it became possible for pre-school education to be considered on a national level. While voluntary agencies within each State continued to be dependent on local initiatives, machinery had been established whereby professional and non-professional members of pre-school organisations could meet together on a regular basis to consider the work of the Gowrie Centres and to discuss other matters of mutual interest.

Initially only Kindergarten Unions were represented but later other organisations were invited to attend meetings and later still to join State branches. These were established to bring together voluntary agencies and professional groups associated with the care and education of pre-school children.

A.P.A. State branches aimed to meet the needs of member organisations within the State, to stimulate interest and concern for the needs of young children and to provide information on the situation within the State and across the nation.

The A.P.A. developed an ever widening concern. It organised Teachers' College principals to meet together to develop programmes of teacher education which were accepted across Australia. It developed nationally accepted standards for pre-school and day-care centres, organised national conferences, introduced post-graduate training for professional officers and later sponsored a scholarship scheme to encourage further studies both within Australia and overseas. The A.P.A. was responsible also for the publication of the only journal in Australia devoted exclusively to matters associated with young children.

In the absence of any other national authority the A.P.A. represented Australia on International organisations and provided information for the Federal Government on matters of national concern. In 1972 it was named in the Child Care Act as the authority to assess the qualifications of staff in child care centres which received Federal Government assistance.

The A.P.A., established by the Federal Government, thus provided community involvement in the formulation and implementation of policy long before "community involvement" had become a fashionable notion or accepted as Government policy.

In 1972 the Federal Government introduced the Child Care Act. This Act aimed to improve the quality of care in day care centres and to provide capital grants, recurrent assistance for qualified staff and to special needs children and

grants for research and evaluation in matters related to child care.

In all States, Governments had provided subsidies for pre-school education but with the introduction of the Child Care Act assistance was provided for children in day care for the first time in most States. It was also the first time since the establishment of the Lady Gowrie Centres in 1939 that money had been made available for research and evaluation.

In 1966 Commonwealth Scholarships were made available for students in pre-school colleges on the same basis as those paid to students in other tertiary education institutions. This was significant because the majority of students who trained as pre-school teachers undertook their training in colleges sponsored by voluntary agencies and unlike teachers of older children, they were required to support themselves and pay for their training.

In 1969 the Pre-school Colleges Grants Act provided unmatched capital grants to expand pre-school teacher training facilities in all States. This Act created another precedent. It was the first time that unmatched capital grants had been paid by the Federal Government for educational institutions within the States. Four years later the cost of students' fees were met and all students were awarded unbonded non-means tested living allowances.

On February 19th, 1973, the Australian Government announced the establishment of the Australian Pre-schools Committee. This Committee, pending its establishment as a Commission, was appointed by the Minister for Education. The Committee was asked to recommend measures that the Government should adopt to ensure that all children be given the opportunity to undertake one year of pre-school education and that child care be provided for children below school age to meet the needs of children of working parents and underprivileged families. The Report of this Committee was tabled in November 1973. On February 18th 1974, almost exactly one year after the establishment of the Australian Pre-schools Committee the Prime Minister announced that the Social Welfare Commission had been asked to look at the development of pre-school and day care opportunities from a welfare aspect. A Project Team was established to advise the Social Welfare Commission on the following matters:

1. Proposals for an on-going scheme which would make early and visible progress towards providing pre-school opportunities for every Australian child within six years.
2. Proposals for comprehensive day care type services to be established throughout Australia on a priority needs basis. These services would be Australian Government sponsored and community based; they would incorporate varying types of assistance relating to the care of children before and after entry to formal schooling and related counselling and educational assistance for parents; these services were to be integrated with pre-school, school programs and other services.

Seven months later, on September 19th, the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister announced the Government's decision to establish a Children's Commission. In making this announcement the following statement was made:

1. Pending the establishment under Statute of the Children's Commission, the Interim Commission for the Children's Commission will work, in co-operation with other appropriate Australian Government authorities, towards the provision of services for children below school age and children out of school hours. The services will be designed to promote the well-being of children, to enhance the quality of life and to promote equality of opportunity for children and their parents. The special needs of handicapped, non-English speaking, Aboriginal, isolated and other such groups of children will be recognised.
2. The Interim Committee will be responsible to the Special Minister of State in his capacity as Minister Assisting the Prime Minister. The Interim Committee will ensure that:
   - the program is flexible;
   - the program is community based;
   - services are integrated;
   - the program develops within a framework of clearly defined priorities, with first priority given to those in greatest need;
   - services recognise that the care and development of children are inter-related so that there is no rigid distinction between educating and caring for children.

The Interim Committee will be mindful of the Government's intention that by 1980 all children in Australia will have access to services designed to take care of their educational, emotional, physical, social and recreational needs.

3. The Interim Committee will sponsor and promote the rapid development of a comprehensive range of diversified and integrated childhood services, including;
   - early childhood education;
   - full day care, family day care, small group care, etc;
   - playgroups, toddlers groups;
   - occasional care;
   - before and after school care, holiday care;
   - emergency care;
   - any other service that may be deemed necessary or desirable in order to meet the long-term objective.

4. In order to carry out its task, the Committee will:
   - Examine the relative needs of communities in Australia for the provision of integrated, diversified and comprehensive childhood services;
   - determine the relevant factors to be considered in the rating of communities on the basis of need, and establish an equitable rating system for the disbursement of funds among communities according to need;
   - stimulate community participation in the expression of needs and in the design and implementation of services;
   - establish procedures for receiving and processing of applications for Australian Government assistance;
   - make recommendations to the Minister on the immediate financial needs of communities and priorities within those needs.
   - make recommendations on financial arrangements for the Australian Government to make available assistance to State, Territory, regional, local government, non-profit and other organisations, and to other persons involved in the services or in related research;
   - consult with other Australian Government authorities on the provision of funds in respect of relevant services provided by them;
   - recommend the financial principles on which childhood services are to operate;
   - recommend standards bearing in mind the flexible nature of the program;
   - initiate, coordinate and where necessary, conduct in-service, on-the-job, short intensive training, and conversion courses for personnel to be involved in the program. These courses would provide training for community development personnel, day mothers, parents, child care aides, child care advisers, social workers, and other persons whose services the Committee finds will be necessary and/or desirable;
   - promote the increased provision of appropriate formal training for professional, sub-professional and ancillary personnel needed for the implementation of the program;
   - recommend adequate conditions of employment for personnel to be used in the program particularly those who are not presently covered by any award, determination or agreement;
   - devise a system of job classification and examine accreditation requirements for personnel to be involved in the implementation of the program;
   - promote research, including pilot projects, and undertake evaluation of these programs;
   - collect and disseminate information and promote publicity in order to create a climate of enquiry in relation to childhood services;
   - arrange the drafting of appropriate legislation for the establishment of the Children's Commission and advise on the implications of this for existing relevant legislation.

5. For these purposes, the Interim Committee may —
   - where appropriate, consult with Australian, State and local Government authorities and such authorities, bodies and persons as it thinks necessary;
   - with the approval of the Minister, set

up sub-committees or other advisory bodies to assist the Committee in the determination of action to be taken with regard to particular aspects of the program.

6. The Interim Committee may —
   - recommend staff establishment action which it believes necessary to support its operations;
   - recommend the employment of consultants to carry out specific tasks.

7. The Interim Committee shall be responsible for initiating the program no later than 1 January 1975, and will, in the meanwhile, take over responsibility for the administration of all existing national commitments, and those in the Territories, in the area of child care and pre-schools.

The Children's Commission Bill was introduced into the House of Representatives on April 15th and passed with minor amendments on May 13th.

The functions of the Commission are to be as follows:

(a) to ascertain the needs of the Australian community for services for children and to make recommendations to the Minister in respect of those needs, including recommendations in relation to:
   (i) organised means of providing and financing services for children;
   (ii) the financial assistance to be provided by Australia to, or to organisations established by, the governments of the States and Territories and local government authorities, and to charitable organisations and other organisations and persons, for the establishment, development and maintenance of means of providing services for children or for research and planning in relation to those services; and
   (iii) the education and training of persons involved, or to be involved, in the provision of services for children;

(b) to investigate means of securing and, with the approval of the Minister, to arrange for, the representation of Australia or of the Commission on organisations established by the government authority, being organisations that are involved in services for children;

(c) to take part in planning in relation to services for children, including planning to achieve:
   (i) the availability, throughout Australia, of a comprehensive range of services for children;
   (ii) the co-ordination and integration of services for children; and
   (iii) the involvement, to the greatest extent practicable, of members of local and other communities in the provision of services for children; and

(d) with the approval of the Minister, to make grants out of the moneys of the Commission, on such conditions, if any, as the Commission determines, of financial assistance of the kind referred to in sub-paragraph (a) (ii).

In addition to the functions of the Commission under sub-section (1), the Commission shall have such other functions as are conferred on it by or under any other Act.

The Commission shall exercise its functions with a view to:

(a) ensuring that priority is given to the provision of services for children in circumstances where the greatest need for those services exists;

(b) subject to paragraph (a), ensuring that services for children are available to meet all needs for such services;

(c) improving the range of services for children available in Australia;

(d) ensuring that services for children provided in Australia are of an adequate standard;

(e) meeting the needs of children suffering disadvantages for social, economic, health, ethnic, locational, cultural, lingual or other reasons; and

(f) encouraging diversity, flexibility and innovation in the provision of services for children.

In the performance of its functions, the Commission shall, to the greatest extent practicable, consult and co-operate with Departments of State and with authorities established by or under laws of Australia, being Departments or authorities responsible for

aspects of the planning of, the provision of, the training of persons to provide, and the provision of financial assistance for, services for children.

The Commission may do all things that are necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of its functions and, in particular, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Commission:

(a) may conduct an inquiry, including a public inquiry, into any matter being investigated by the Commission; and

(b) may engage, or make other arrangements with, a person to carry out planning or research for, or to supply information or make submissions to, the Commission.

The Commission may, by instrument under its seal, delegate to a member, or to a member of the staff referred to in sub-section 20 (1), either generally or otherwise as provided by the instrument of delegation, all or any of its powers under this Act (except this power of delegation).

A delegation under this section is revocable at will and does not prevent the exercise of a power by the Commission.

The services for children will include:

(a) the care of pre-school aged children at a time or times of the day when they are not being cared for in their own homes;

(b) the education of pre-school aged children;

(c) the care of children other than pre-school aged children at a time or times of the day when they are not being provided with an educational service and are not being cared for in their own homes;

(d) the care of physically or mentally disabled or handicapped children at a time or times of the day when they are not being provided with a prescribed service and are not being cared for in their own homes;

(e) assistance to parents in connection with care of their sick children in their own homes at a time or times of the day when the parents are engaged in employment;

(f) assistance to, and counselling of, parents in relation to the raising of children; and

(g) other services, not being educational services or other services prescribed for the purposes of this paragraph, provided to children, or to the parents of children, that will be conducive to meeting the needs of children having special needs or to promoting the physical or mental development of children.

Since the beginning of 1973 approval has been given for the building of about 560 pre-schools and 184 day care centres — 30 family day care units have been organised and 10 programs providing an integrated pre-school and day care program have been commenced. Finance has been made available to playgroups and recurrent assistance paid to existing pre-school and day care services.

Special facilities have been provided for isolated children and for children who are physically, socially, culturally or emotionally handicapped.

Assistance has also been given to the care of school aged children before and after school and during school holidays. Health programs have been developed to provide regular health care and some feasibility studies are being undertaken to ascertain what kinds of services might be most effective in the future.

A wide range of training courses to ensure an adequate provision of qualified staff have also been supported. Increased numbers of students are enrolled in traditional pre-school institutions. There has been an increase in the number of institutions offering diploma courses and a diversity of courses have been introduced. These new courses include conversion courses for teachers trained in other than pre-school teaching, refresher courses for pre-school teachers wishing to re-enter the workforce, sub-professional courses for people assisting teachers and working in day care, in-service training and a two-year part-time degree course for teachers holding a diploma.

To overcome the shortage of staff needed by training institutions a special one-year course for 50 students is being provided by Macquarie University.

Whether or not the initiative so far taken by the Australian Government and those which might be taken in the future provide for the well-being of children, enhance their quality of life and provide equality of opportunity for children and their parents will depend on the knowledge, understanding and integrity of those who set out to put the Australian Government program into practice.

The initiatives undertaken by the Australian

Government have enabled individuals, community groups, voluntary agencies, Government Departments and academic institutions to undertake the development of programs which they may or may not have undertaken without them. The Australian Government has provided not only financial support but also an organisational structure and a philosophical basis on which new programs might be developed.

While Committees have been appointed and dispensed with and while reports have been written and legislation formulated and debated, facilities for children have been expanded and continue to be developed.

Many people not previously associated with the care and education of young children have recently become involved. There is a danger that new-comers to the field may believe they have all the solutions to the problems of early childhood care and education, primarily because they have not had time to discover what problems have to be solved.

Early childhood educators in particular must understand the implications of what they do. For too long education has been seen as the experiences of a child in an institution called a school. Providing these experiences for children in day care and other places, including their home, have for some reason not been seen by teachers as educational.

Whether or not the present programs for young children succeed or fail will depend on early childhood educators like yourselves. Words like 'flexible programs', 'community involvement' and 'priority of need' will come to mean nothing unless you are prepared to translate them into practice. The dichotomy between care and education can only be eliminated when people who work with children come to believe that everything which happens to a child within his home or outside it is in fact education.

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS FOR PARENTS' DISCUSSION GROUPS.

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Compared with the marvellous, comprehensive schemes to help parents that we heard about yesterday, I know I am ploughing a very tiny field. But I believe it's an important one. I am concerned with the production of some audio-visual materials for use by parents' discussion groups.

At last year's meeting of this Association, some of you may remember, I spoke of this project which was financed by a grant from the Australian Government through the Advisory Committee on Child Care Research. This allowed me to work under the wing of the Australian Council for Educational Research for two days a week for a year.

Now people are saying "Is your project finished?" I'm glad to say it's not finished, because for work of this kind, to be finished would mean it had ceased to be useful. However, the grant is finished, and Part I of the project, if I can call it that, has resulted in the production of two short films, three sets of colour slides with commentaries and some scripts for leaflets. These we have tried out with some parent groups, and are now revising in the light of the parents' responses.

Because it was necessary to have a specific audience in mind when designing the materials, it was decided to concentrate on providing for small discussion groups of parents whose "normal" first child was about one month old, six months old, or twelve months old.

New parents are in the process of learning basic parenting skills, and developing their child-rearing attitudes and styles. Even those who held very firmly expressed attitudes before becoming parents may be finding that the realities of the situation are causing them to think again. Suggestions which help them to adopt sound practices at this stage are likely to benefit succeeding children, and possibly grand-children!

It seems that these new parents do not need advice, or instruction, so much as some basic information on the needs of babies, together with empathic support as they work out their own deeply held values, their circumstances, their own reasonable needs, and also the need of their child for the kind of care that will help him attain full and healthy development. To achieve successful child-rearing is no easy task, but is an ongoing process of adaption to change, that requires both confidence in oneself and confidence in the child.

Small group discussions with parents whose child is about the same age, allow a sharing of ideas and practical suggestions for alternative courses of action, with others who have similar concerns and who are going through similar experiences. But, because groups of parents discussing babies may be sharing ignorance, and exchanging mis-information, it is desirable that someone is present who has a knowledge of child development. There are many such people in most communities who could help bridge the gap between the knowledge that is becoming available, and the parents who want to know. But they are busy people, often without the time or resources to search out the knowledge, or prepare the materials they would need. We aim to provide the materials for their use.

Young children change very rapidly in the first few years. Parents change with them, adapting to each successive phase in their child's development. New parents find it quite difficult enough to cope with their child as he or she is now, without giving much thought to the future. When asked what they thought of a particular book on child care, a very frequent response is, "I only read the bits to do with babies the age mine was at the time." With new parents, especially it seems best to concentrate discussion on a clearly stated level of development, and the progress that can be expected over a limited period. It is very easy for confusion to result when a speaker has a six

months old child in mind, while the listener is thinking of one of six weeks. So it has seemed best to concentrate on development over periods of no more than six months at a time.

The two short films are concerned with two of the major issues faced by parents and children when a baby becomes mobile. The importance of freedom to explore, and the safety problems which this involves in "Joanna"; and attachment behaviour in "Mark". These are seen as two of a series of ten films each dealing with a developmental issue, and at the same time providing a "model" of parenting behaviour that shows, not an "expert" demonstrating how things should be done, but average devoted parents doing things in their own way. The films are very simple, and as natural as we could make them, but in each there is a slightly exaggerated episode to act as a discussion "ice-breaker". The bare shelves in "Joanna's" child-proofed home seem to be especially effective in starting parents talking. "How far should parents go when making their home safe for an exploring baby?"

Although designed for use with new parents, I, and several of my colleagues, have used the materials with groups of students at varied levels, and with child care workers, and found them useful. I hope that some members of the Association, particularly those from other States, will be interested in testing them in other situations, and giving me the kind of "feed back" I need in order to make them more effective.

I hope that funds will, by some miracle, be found to extend the series to provide for pre-natal groups and for parents of children up to at least three years. We need about $30,000 to make the remaining films and slides. Meanwhile I would very much appreciate hearing from anyone interested in helping test the materials. My address is:—

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THE ROLE OF THE ADULT IN EARLY LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE.

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When I attempt to resolve some of the persistent issues that arise from a study of Early Childhood Education, issues such as the age at which early childhood education should begin and the kinds of programs most likely to promote optimal development, my thoughts focus on the first social experience of children and the importance of early stimulation. In considering the role of the caretaking adult at this period, I won't attempt to review the ever increasing volume of literature, but will draw attention, in the main, to some recent contributions.

How important is the adult as a mediator in early learning?

It is possible to position individual theorists and practictioners at various points on a continuum ranging from Piaget, at the low involvement end, to contemporary Russian child psychologists at the opposite end. I shall define only the anchors of the continuum.

Piaget focuses attention on the self-initiated activity of the young child. From the very beginning, he says, the child's behaviour is characterised by sensory and motor acts which gradually become integrated into behaviour schemes. Through his own actions the infant gains new experiences which increase the range and scope of his activities and in this way he literally develops his own intelligence. Instead of passively registering environmental events, the child interprets them. His responses are determined by his interpretation of these events, rather than by the events themselves. Experience does not exert effects ON, but instead WITH, an infant. *He* modifies raw experience as much as it changes *him*.

During the first month of life behaviour is characterised by unlearned reflex actions which are differentiated out of the spontaneous, total activity of the neonate. Experience modifies and supplements these inherited mechanisms so that they become stabilized, generalized and, at the same time, more discriminating. Piaget uses three concepts to account for the behavioural changes arising from the young child's experiences with his environment: functional assimilation explains the child's basic tendency to exercise a structure and make it function; generalizing assimilation explains the tendency of a scheme, for example, the sucking scheme, to extend itself and generalize to objects such as fist, finger, blanket or toy; recognitory assimilation explains how the hungry infant selects a suitable object to suck, for example a nipple or teat rather than a fist or blanket. This discrimination is brought about by the repetition of actions resulting from functional and generalizing assimilation.

Piaget makes no reference to a mediating adult when he speaks of the infant's growing awareness of the properties of environmental objects, and his organization of sensory input from his surroundings. The mothers of Piagetian children are seldom active participants in the learning processes of their children. Instead, they are shadowy forms in the background providing unobtrusively for the children's physical needs.

I now turn to look to the Russian position at the opposite end of the continuum. Bronfenbrenner (1970) speaks of "upbringing" as virtually a national hobby in the U.S.S.R. Every man, woman and child accepts responsibility for the upbringing of all young Soviet citizens in accordance with the officially endorsed and widely publicised views of Makarenko, the leading Soviet educator. It is not surprising then, to find a strong emphasis on adult mediation between the child and his environment running through the writings of leading Russian child psychologists.

Yendovitskaya, in "The Psychology of Pre-School Children" (1971) says:

> The main factor in the establishment and development of a reciprocal relation between the young child and his surrounding environment is the social interaction of the child with the socializing adult.

Notwithstanding the Russian finding that not all infants respond favourably to early stimulation, social mediation begins from birth. In the hospital nurseries all normal newborns are stimulated visually and aurally by "teachers" who "sing to the neonates, dangle coloured rings before their eyes and shake a tambourine to their ears".

Yendorvitskaya refers to the first signs of neonatal attention to environmental objects as "unconditional orienting reactions". These reactions are characterised by an optimal orientation of the sensory organ towards the object, and an elevated sensitivity of this organ, a state of affairs which, Yendovitskaya believes, provides the best conditions for perception.

This emergence of the two-sided social interaction of the adult with the child is marked by the acceptance, in the child of 2-3 months, of characteristic arousal reactions to particular objects. In the course of the interaction the adult first uses indicatory gestures and then words to attract and hold the infant's attention. In this way the adult strengthens the object's direct influence on the child, and diverts him from other things. As a result, the child learns to isolate objects from the surrounding environment and to attract the attention to another human being.

Thus from birth, the adult takes the initiative in directing the infant's early learning experiences. She mediates between the infant and the surrounding objects, organising his perceptual experiences in such a way that he attends to those parts of the environment which the adult selects and brings to his notice. The role of the adult is a deliberately fashioned and forceful one, tempered by affection for the child, and it stands in marked contrast to the adult role implied in Piaget's theory of cognitive development. In Russian child-rearing practice the caring adult is unlikely to be the child's biological mother.

The Origins of Adult-Infant Interactions.

From birth the infant is attracted by moving objects, and by objects with black and white contrast, or sharp contours. Accordingly, the mother's face becomes an effective stimulus for the infant, and he focuses his gaze upon her as she holds him in her arms while she feeds him. Investigations of the origins of attachment behaviour suggest that soon after birth, or within a few weeks, many of the naturally occurring behaviours of infants such as crying, scanning, sucking, clinging, smiling and vocalizing come to be directed towards the mother as she cares for him. Thus the mother becomes the target for these spontaneous actions, permitting and encouraging the infant to do what comes naturally.

Richards (1974), who prefers the concept of "psychological communication" to that of attachment, says that at birth the infant possesses cognitive mechanisms which lead to his being attracted by the perceived features of other persons. The first stage in social relations, he says, is a mutual attraction and attentiveness between the infant and the caring adult which brings about the first fleeting social interchanges.

Newson (1974) believes that the human infant is biologically tuned to react to person-mediated events, as these are the only environmental happenings which are phased in their timing to co-ordinate in a predictable manner with his own activities and spontaneous reactions. The baby is pre-programmed, he says, with some kind of sensitivity towards reciprocal social interaction so that shortly after birth he enters into a life-long experience of social communication with other communicating individuals.

Whenever adults react sensitively towards an infant they do so by monitoring the moment-to-moment shifts in the infant's attention and interest, and then timing their vocalizations or actions in ways which are reciprocally patterned with those of the infant. Out of this reciprocity the communication of shared meanings gradually begins to take place. Newson believes that most of what a human infant learns is learned in the context of an outgoing dynamic social interaction process. The inanimate environment, he says, provides only the most impoverished stimulus towards an understanding, in human terms, of the world in which the infant lives.

Furthermore, according to Newson, the human infant is biologically pre-programmed to emit "signals" of a kind that cause the caring adult to attend to them, and to endow them with social significance. The mother is constantly monitoring her baby, and her contingent responsiveness is based on her acceptance of him as an individual whose wishes must be understood and respected, even if not always met. This social programming to which an infant is subjected is continuous and cumulative.

The Organization and Differentiation of Infant Behaviour.

Trevarthen (Newson 1974) says that from birth and well before that time, the behaviour of the human infant is biologically organized in certain complex ways to serve functionally appropriate biological ends. The behaviour of the newborn is never an unpatterned and random sequence of events, but comes "pre-packed", as it were, in the sense that it is parcelled up in discrete temporal chunks. This interpretation, which arose from photographic records of on-going infant behaviour bears a close resemblance to the stream of behaviour identified by ecological psychologists Barker and Wright, some thirty years ago, when working in naturalistic settings of behaviour.

The infant's behaviour always consists of chains of extremely brief but quite distinct intentional gestures which are highly organized as sequences of co-ordinated actions, Trevarthen says "movements of head, eyes and eyebrows, hands and fingers, arms and legs, together with vocalizations, are all beautifully articulated and synchronised".

He speculates that there may be two distinctly different modes of response, dispending on whether or not the eliciting stimulus is an object or a person. In the former situation. Trevarthen calls the co-ordinated pattern of activity "pre-reaching", and in the latter, "pre-speech." As the infant is "pre-tuned" to produce and to respond to expressive movement patterns or gesticulations which conform to certain basic biological rhythms, the adult is able to communicate with the infant from birth.

In recent years numerous experimental studies have shown that from birth the infant is responsive to his surroundings and that he is endowed with considerable ability to gather and process information from his environment. From birth he is structured in such a way that he will help to determine his own life experiences, and the adults who care for him must take this into account.

Pattern of Adult-Infant Interaction.

A considerable number of the papers presented at the Society for Research in Child Development Conference in Denver, Colorado, in April, 1975 were concerned with infant behaviour. At a symposium on mother-infant reciprocity researchers presented papers on various interaction patterns. One speaker examined developmental processes in mother-infant gazing behaviour. He videotaped mother-infant interaction sequences over a period of time and then divided these into gazing units and sub-units (which he called "glad" and "sad" units) in order to examine developmental changes in infant behaviour resulting from a complex feed back system.

A second speaker examined infant regulation of maternal play behaviour and/or maternal regulation of infant play behaviour. A third speaker investigated gaze direction as the infant's way of controlling his mother's teaching behaviour, as she sought to show him how to retrieve a cube from behind a screen. Another speaker videotaped the course of social interactions between a sighted infant and his blind parents, where the mother has been blind from birth and the father, from 17 years of age.

The most effective presentation to me was an investigation of infant emotions in normal and perturbed interactions. In order to study the infant's contribution to mother-child interactions, the researcher had distorted the mother-child face-to-face situation by instructing her to remain totally unresponsive to the infant's attempts to interact. The split screen technique was used to show the behaviour of the infant and of the mother simultaneously.

The following interactional patterns were presented. The first baby, aged 74 days, attempts to interact with his mother by greeting her. She fails to respond and this has a sobering effect upon him. He tries again with an enthusiastic greeting. When his mother again fails to respond his gaze becomes wary and his movements jerky. He reaches out towards her and when she ignores this action, he drops his arms and turns his head away from his mother.

A similar pattern of behaviour in response to perturbated interactions was observed in a 70 day old infant. An earlier film of the same baby at 35 days showed that his expressive displays lacked some of the enrichment observed at 70 days, but he made the same kinds of attempts to interact with his still faced mother.

In a fourth film a 100 day old infant shows greeting behaviour towards his mother who remains unresponsive. The infant drops his head and turns away and in this act of withdrawal he orients his face and body away from his mother. The speaker reported that this

kind of reaction is seen in babies as young as 2 weeks of age, and is found cross-culturally. The face is one of several expressive communications. The stone-faced mother violates the rules of social interaction and the baby who, at this age, is rule bound, is trapped in the contradiction. A still face condition to the infant's approach behaviour causes his withdrawal as a consequence of his experience of failure. This action is akin to the withdrawal behaviour found in hospitalized and institutionalized children. These films dramatically highlighted the delicately patterned interplay of actions and anticipated responses which, when in concert, ensure a harmonious interaction between the mother and the infant.

Schaffer (1974) discusses an intensive investigation of a mother and her infant smiling at each other, carried out by Richards (1971). He found that the infant's behaviour goes through a definite sequence, and what the mother does during this time must be carefully phased to the infant's behaviour. If this does not occur the infant becomes tense and fretful and eventually begins to cry instead of smile. Richard's findings here are supported by the study reported above. Schaffer points out that even the youngest infant is "no formless blob of clay" to be shaped and moulded into a pattern entirely determined by the caretaking adult. On the contrary he has an individuality of his own that determines how he responds to parental treatment, and even determines the nature of the treatment itself.

The notion of genetically determined different levels of activity in newborn infants asserts that infants, by their activity or passivity, influence the emotional responses of members of their families. A busy mother may respond punitively to an active, demanding infant, and an athletic father may lose interest in a son who is content to lie passively in his cot.

Wolff (Schaffer 1974) found that at birth the crying response is high-frequency micro-rhythm, regulated endogenously by the infant's brain mechanisms, and involving quite complex time sequences. He found at least three distinct crying patterns which transmit different signals to the caretaker and which determine, to some extent, how much adult attention the child receives. Infants differ in the extent to which they can produce intense and prolonged outbursts of crying and in the intervals between them and mothers differ in the extent to which they can withhold attention under these varying stimulus conditions. In this way the young infant manipulates, at first unknowingly, his social environment.

Any relationship is a two-way relationship. Schaffer likens mother-infant interactions to a kind of ping-pong game where the move of each partner is to some extent dictated by the previous moves of the other partner. This effect is most clearly demonstrated in the turn-taking nature of mother's and infant's vocalizations. Close observation reveals that a surprisingly large number of mother-infant interactions are initiated and/or terminated by the baby. (Dropping to sleep is an exceedingly effective way of terminating an interaction sequence.) The mother who is sensitive to the behaviour of her child, allows her behaviour to be paced by the child.

Adult-Infant Interactions and the Development of Infant Competence.

Ainsworth and Bell (1974) discuss the notion of infant competence in terms of the child's ability to adapt to an environment which contains an accessible mother figure whose reciprocal behaviour is, to a considerable extent, under the control of the infant's behaviour. This interpretation implies that an infant's competence depends substantially upon the co-operation of the caretaking adult. Thus "an infant is competent to the extent that he can, through his own activity, control the effect that his environment will have upon him".

He is effective in having his wants satisfied, at least in part, because he can influence the behaviour of a responsive mother.

As a result of these experiences the child advances not only in competence, but also in the social skills associated with enlisting the co-operation of others. Guilford considers social competence to be an important aspect of intelligence and its usefulness continues throughout the entire life span. Maternal responsiveness, then, provides a necessary condition for a normally functioning infant to develop social competence.

Four different categories of infant competence can be identified. These are (a) a neonate, who is initially relatively incompetent in the sense of inefficient functioning, may, when paired with a mother who is highly responsive to the signals implicit in his

behaviour, gradually increase his effectiveness in dealing with his physical and social environment. (b) An infant competent enough in relation to his behaviour repertoire at birth, may be inefficient in getting what he wants, if paired with a mother who is unresponsive to his signals. The infant's further development of sensory-motor and social skills will be hampered and his competence impaired in comparison with age peers who are fortunate enough to have responsive mothers. (c) An initially malfunctioning infant may be paired with an unresponsive mother, a life situation which is heavily weighted against the development of competence in this disadvantaged infant. Finally, (d) an infant who is endowed with a potentially efficient repertoire of skills may be paired with a mother who is responsive to the signals implicit in the infant's behaviour. This state of affairs provides the best possible conditions for fostering infant competence.

Implicit in this interpretation of infant competence is the mother's sensitivity to the signals of her baby and her willingness to respond to them. This premise is the antithesis of the old-fashioned idea that responding promptly to the infant's signals constitutes "spoiling", a course of action which must be strenously avoided by the caretaking adult.

In conclusion, I believe that the studies currently being pursued in the area of early mother-infant interactions show promise of a greatly increased understanding of the foundations of early learning, and that we as early childhood educators must take cognisance of the research findings as they become available. In common with Gordon, Caldwell, Weikart and others in the U.S. and Staines and similarly minded people on the Australian scene, I believe that it is too late to begin providing early childhood education and devising enriched programs at the 3 year old level.

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RECORDING INFANT AND EARLY CHILD DEVELOPMENT*

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Continued expansion and development of early childhood services in Australia has made it possible for increasing numbers of young children, toddlers and even infants to be placed in regular full day care. For many of these children there will be a consequent reduction in the amount of contact with their parents, those adults who are usually most concerned with a child's progress and development. For this reason it was considered essential that the development of children in day care be recorded or charted in some way. This would ensure that regular development could be recorded and more significantly that there would be available some means of recognizing possible inconsistencies in development, delays in development or possible retardation.

It was not envisaged that this record would provide a sophisticated analysis but rather an indication of how the child's development was proceeding. If any lag or delay is indicated then referral for detailed analysis and diagnosis would be recommended.

The concern of this paper is to report on the progress of the research project which has as its stated objective the

> "production of an infant and preschool child development record which can be used by teachers, supervisors and paraprofessional personnel in Child Care Centres and other institutions dealing with infants and pre-school aged children."
>
> (Burdon and Teasdale, 1973 C.I.)

Initial proposals considered that an instrument of this nature should have a sound theoretical basis, should be simple and easily administered or recorded while at the same time maintaining high levels of validity and reliability. This would enable the assessment to be carried out by those who have the day to day responsibility for the ongoing care of the young child and who

> "it can be argued . . . know as much and perhaps more about his growth and behaviour than a paediatrician or a psychologist can learn in a brief interview. In our concern to be scientific about assessment we have perhaps relied too heavily on standardized tests and knowledge of normal child development and not enough on the knowledge of the child held by the person with day to day care of him". (Sparrow, 1974 p. 4)

An extensive review of the literature and of existing measures of infant and pre-school development did not bring to light any measure which met the requirements of the proposed Development Record although a small number had similarly stated objectives. More recently, contact has been established with personnel of the National Children's Bureau in London who are engaged in a similar project which closely parallels this but who have been unable to proceed with a standardization of their pilot *Developmental Guides*. (Sparrow, 1974, 1975). The literature and instrument review has led to the establishment of a reasonably extensive file of reviews of instruments which if published could be of some benefit to those involved in research and work with infants and young children. This publication however, must take second priority to the production of the Developmental Record itself.

In order to provide a logical and consistent frame of reference for the behaviours sampled for the Developmental Record it was intended from the outcome that the instrument "Have a sound theoretical basis". (Burdon and Teasdale, 1973, C.I.) To date no broad inclusive theory has been elaborated which accounts for all aspects of development (physical, intellectual, social-personal) in an integrated or

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related fashion. This however, does not excuse the intent. There are the fairly obvious physical developments which occur in a sequence which is well established (Gessell and Ilg, 1949). The sequence of development of other behaviours is also well documented and charted (Sheridan, 1971) though the interrelated significance for internal process of these behaviours is less well elaborated. Of the developmental theories the "evolved-primate" theories of Piaget, Bruner and Chomsky may come closest to providing an explanation for man's development as revealed by his overt behaviours. There have been some recent attempts to relate aspects of cognitive, moral and social development (Flavell, 1968, Selman, 1971, 1974) while Piaget (Piaget 1955, Piaget and Inhelder 1969) has also devoted considerable attention to this question.

The theoretical focus adopted in this project is Piagetian. While this focus is obviously related to cognitive developments certain explanations for social and personal development follow from the adoption of this conceptual framework. It is not envisaged that there will be too much difficulty in presenting a broad based theoretical conceptual framework for the Developmental Record although this has not been done formally at this time. Another outcome of this project could be a later elaboration in much greater detail of this theoretical-conceptual framework.

In keeping with the stated objectives of maintaining simplicity and ease of administration and to utilize the accumulating knowledge about particular children developed by their day to day care givers it was intended that the Developmental Record be an observation based instrument. As such, it would comprise a series of statements of behaviour intended to be indicative of developmental sequences. It was intended that these behaviour items would be easily and unmistakably observable in children, would be closely related to the dynamics of the developmental processes in as much as these dynamics have been elaborated by theoretical and research considerations and be significantly related to important aspects of the child's actual behaviour and development. The Record would thus avoid a "testing" situation and the consequent problems of interpretation of results often encountered when such techniques are used especially by personnel not trained to do so.

It became obvious in the early months of the project that many statements of age related behaviours existed already in some form in the many instruments that were being reviewed. As well a good deal of attention was given to theoretical and research writings of the nature and dynamics of development and as a result other items were developed. An extensive pool of items of age appropriate behaviours was built up in this way. These items were charted at one month age intervals up to age 48 months. From this pool of items a more selective list was drawn up. Items were included in this initial experimental format on the basis of their fit with theoretical or conceptual considerations and the observability of the behaviour in normal or natural environmental situations. As well, consideration was given to obtaining a reasonable cover or spread of items over the four year age range. At this stage these items were field tested for their appropriateness for inclusion in the final experimental format. This field testing was carried out in Day Care Centres and in private homes. It was necessary to ascertain whether the items selected at the various age levels were indicative of the development of children at that age and whether the items gave a clear and simple indication of behaviour which could be observed or reported. At this stage behaviours were checked as "passed", "not passed" or "don't know". A simple analysis of patterns of responses to the items was carried out and comments from the investigators, from Day Care personnel and from parents about the items were summarized to assist in the selection of items for the final experimental format. As a result of considering these the need for certain modifications and changes became apparent.

The initial intention to include items at one month age intervals was modified because it was seen that many aspects of behaviour are not uniquely or exclusively age specific and that ranges of ages exist within which behaviours appear and develop. As well the one month interval would have made the Record excessively long and unwieldy and might have deterred many people from considering its use.

A second modification was in the area of the nature of the items themselves. The first proposal had been to produce an observation based record and not to use a format that required a test-type situation. It soon became apparent however, that certain behaviours occur only in response to a specific situation and that some structure would be required if particular types of responses are to be elicited. Nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that the

Record is being designed for use by para-professionals who would be in close and regular contact with the children. In many cases these people could report behaviours on the basis of their experience with a particular child, or could attempt to elicit them in the course of their interaction with the children during their daily activities. As an example, it was found that a non-participant observer took considerable time to record the range of language responses of an 18 month old child. However, those working directly with the child were able to record this range as a result of their daily interactions with him, and their deliberate attempts to elicit certain responses in a natural, non-threatening way.

While still not envisaging a formal "testing" situation then, item development was extended to cover behaviours that could be observed through relatively informal interaction with the child, together with behaviours that could be described accurately by significant others (e.g. mothers, other staff of the Centre). If, after trial, these additional types of items prove suitable for inclusion in the record then guidelines will need to be developed, particularly so that necessary interactions with the child can be built in to the normal routines of a Centre.

The preliminary field testing has highlighted a possible important use for a Developmental Record. The investigators have been dismayed at the general lack of knowledge and insight about children's development displayed by many (especially junior) employees in Day Care Centres. This obviously is detrimental to the balanced growth of the child. During the course of the study a number of Day Care Centre personnel have expressed surprise that certain behaviours are "normal" at a given age level, and hence children need to be given opportunities for development in these areas. This has reinforced to the investigators the importance of having the record completed by those who work with the child, for this should enable them to see and experience what is happening to the child in terms of his growth and development, help focus attention on the more important aspects of development and help to set developmental and experiential objectives for personnel.

Some attention had been given to the final format of the Record. Because of the scoring difficulties and other points already mentioned, consideration had been given to recording data in a way similar to that used in the Denver Developmental Screening Test (Frankenberg, Dodds and Fandel, 1973). This format has some advantages including the fact that behaviours are checked straight onto a profile or summary sheet, which is thus very readily available and shows obvious areas of developmental lag as well as the extent of such lag or delay. However, no firm decision has yet been made on this question of the actual format of the Record.

During the early part of 1975 the selection of items for inclusion in the final experimental version was carried out. Considerable attention was given to each item, as a result of previous experience and later considerations, until a final list of items was completed. This final experimental list included items up to 5 years of age in response to a number of suggestions that the 4 to 5 year age range should be considered.

The most recent problem encountered was related to the "standardization" of the behaviours to specific age ranges and included the selection of the standardization sample and the collection of information from this sample. It was obvious that no captive group of children would be representative enough of the population to allow their behaviours to be considered as the norm so a more representative sample was required. The Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics was approached for assistance and this was readily forthcoming. The Bureau selected blocks of dwellings within a range of socio-economic areas in metropolitan Adelaide. Each dwelling in these blocks will be checked and where there are children within the age range then data will be collected for that child.

The actual format to be used for the collection of data has also caused some concern. Experience in the pilot study in 1974 indicated that both parent and care giver tended to acquiesce in responding to direct questions about the behaviour of their children while the direct observation of behaviour by non-involved short term visitors was difficult and took a good deal of time. Given these circumstances it was considered that the most appropriate way to collect the data would be by questionnaire response from the child's mother. In this way the obvious response will be disguised and the data will be collected by prompting mothers to tell more about their children's development and behaviours. A sample of 600 spread over the age range was considered the minimum required for the standardization of an instrument of this kind. If time and resources permit a larger

sample will be used.

The project has been delayed by the necessity to develop a questionnaire from the item list drawn up previously. In many cases it has proved to be particularly difficult to translate a baldly stated behaviour item into a disguised questionnaire item and there has been the danger that some items which may well have been included in the final format may not be included here for standardization because of this difficulty.

At this point in time it is still hoped that the project will be completed as proposed by the end of 1975 so that the Developmental Record can be put to the use for which it is being devised. However, the version which will become available then can only be carried out to develop norms for other groups within the Australian population.

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SELF-CONCEPTS AND SCHOLASTIC SUCCESS

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Success at school is still an important determinant of one's life style. Failure to meet the expectations of the educational system leads to exclusion from a number of desirable occupations, and may also lead to an inability to enjoy certain leisure activities, to anti-intellectual attitudes and feelings of inadequacy and inferiority.

In a previous age lack of success would have led to situations which were physically painful for the child, but today would be more likely to involve frustration, boredom and psychological pressures of various kinds.

One may ask why children fail at school, in order that whatever steps are possible may be taken to avoid or alleviate these influences.

There are a whole range of influences over which we as yet have little control. Most obvious are genetic factors, with the intra-uterine, birth, and peri-natal periods being the next most crucial. It is certainly true of the intra-uterine period that when an organ or an organism is developing most rapidly, then that organism is most susceptible to dysgenic influences. Some theorists (e.g. Erikson, 1965) also take the view that when the organism, and here we are talking of children, enter the "booming, buzzing confusion" of the world, then their earliest experiences will be the most crucial.

I think one could argue that this was true in the sense of the first months or years of life, but equally true of the first months or years of school. Erikson (1965) speaks of the "sense of trust" as the basic requirement of a healthy personality, and Bowlby (1951) although under attack from such sources as Rutter (1972) has asserted the crucial nature of the mother child relationship especially between six and thirty-six months.

The compensatory education movement can be interpreted as an attempt to promote cognitive development and other related skills prior to the child's entry to school. This is exemplified in the work of Bereiter and Engelmann (1966), but can be found in numerous other studies (Gray, 1971; Gray and Klaus, 1970; Karnes, Teska and Hodgins, 1970; Karnes, Teska, Hodgins and Badger, 1970; Weikart, 1969) all of which are reviewed in Clough (1972).

Certainly the best of these programmes have been highly successful in producing spectacular gains in cognitive and scholastic skills, but there have been several limitations on these effects. The first is the ephemeral nature of such gains, with children undergoing such programmes being virtually indistinguishable from their equally disadvantaged peers after two to three years of schooling.

A second criticism has focussed on the extent to which the programmes have tried to teach tasks alien to the child's background, and have led to a denial of the child's own culture and judgments about the irrelevance of the child's experiences outside the school.

Another important limitation concerns the almost negligible effects on the personality development of the children. Even short term effects have been rare. This may in part be due to the difficulty in measuring personality, but may also be due to a lack of focus on this aspect of development.

It is this criticism which I wish to take up and develop, for there is a growing body of evidence that personality factors and in particular the child's self concept, may be an important mediating variable in the child's achievement, and eventually his life satisfaction.

Evidence concerning the relationship between self-concepts and performance come from a variety of sources, three of which are the clinical insights of therapists, the literature on self-fulfilling prophecies and recent research on locus of control.

Those who are remedial reading teachers will be aware of the negative attitudes towards

reading held by their clients. Such children often express the attitude that they are incapable of learning to read, but also assert that reading is a waste of time, that it is not a logical process, and that they do not want to learn to read. Half the problem is solved when these defences are removed and positive attitudes develop.

Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) produced the best known work on the effect of teacher expectations, reporting that in their studies children selected randomly and nominated to teachers as potential intellectual spurters did in fact gain more on intelligence tests than their classmates. This study has been severely criticised on methodological grounds (Thorndike, 1968), Rosenthal's ability as a researcher has been challenged (Barber and Silver, 1968) and attempts to replicate the results (eg. Fleming and Anttonen, 1971) have failed. On the other hand some studies (eg. Palardy, 1969) have supported Rosenthal and Jacobson's original work. Pidgeon (1970) provides a useful review of some of this work.

Two final comments I should like to make about the teacher expectation effect is that in the original study it was virtually only in the first two grades that it operated, and that teacher expectation effects might be expected to operate only on some occasions, and that thus a failure to replicate is not so crucial as it would be in other cases.

The locus of control studies have identified a continuum from an internal locus of control to external locus of control. Those who fall at the internal end of the continuum believe that success in a wide range of tasks is due to personal effort, while those at the external end believe that success is more governed by luck. These orientations have been shown to be in existence prior to school entry, to be relatively stable, and an internal locus of control is associated with high scholastic achievement, and is negatively correlated with delinquency and a number of other negative behaviours.

A study by Clifford and Cleary (1972) found a correlation of 0.43 between their measure of locus of control and scholastic performance, in contrast to a correlation of 0.53 between I.Q. and scholastic achievement in their fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade pupils of both sexes. Thus, in this particular case, their measure of self-concepts was almost as good a predictor of performance as intelligence.

Of course, one can get into the chicken and egg situation very easily in the self-concept area, and there would appear to be no argument against the proposition that at some point achievement, as well as positive attitudes about one's ability to achieve is necessary, but it does seem important to point out that:

(a) Positive attitudes towards oneself are important, (eg. Rogers, 1969).

(b) That ultimately higher levels of scholastic achievement may be reached by making the development of positive self-concepts a prime aim as opposed to making scholastic achievement the major early emphasis.

This latter proposition is not meant to imply that genuine learning is not a legitimate way to establish positive self-concepts, but merely implies that a different emphasis may be required in certain cases.

Having established a sound theoretical basis for considering that the development of positive self-concepts may be an appropriate initial aim for education. I want to outline what I consider to be a worthwhile research project in this area, and report on progress to date.

It appears important to distinguish three possible influences on the child's self-concepts, the home, the pre-school and the infants classes of the primary school.

The home would be considered to be the most important influence on the child's self-concept. both because of the primacy of its influence, because of its continuity over time, and also because of its relative consistency of influence. However, one might wish to distinguish between self-concept as a scholastic achiever, and self-concept in general; and the pre-school and the infants' classes may be more crucial for self-concept as a scholastic achiever.

In addition, the impact of the pre-school and infants' classes on the general self-concept may be extremely important.

At this stage it is proposed to commence the measurements of self-concepts at the pre-school stage, to consider changes within the pre-school year, and to investigate the impact of the primary school, and particularly the infants' classes on self-concepts.

Now the major problem is the lack of suitable

scales for the measurement of self-concepts. After considerable discussion we decided to develop a rating scale for use by the children's pre-school teachers, a scale which contained the following 25 items (Appendix A).

The main instructions were: "Assign a rating from 1 (low) to 5 (high) on each of the 25 items to each child. A 1 rating would imply that the child was in the lower 20% on this attribute in comparison to other children of the same age, a 2 in the next 20% and so on."

To date the rating scale has been administered by eight pre-school teachers and their assistants, with over seventy protocols being completed. Each of the twenty-five items has consistently discriminated between those rating low on the test as a whole, and those falling at the top end (item analysis chi square values have ranged between 16.2 and 40.0, p being less than .01 in each case).

Thirteen children were independently scored by more than one rater and inter-rater reliability was high at 0.93 ($p < .01$).

Seventeen children were re-scored by the same rater after approximately three months. A correlation of 0.74 ($p < .01$) was found in this case.

While this figure is in itself quite a satisfactory one, several of the raters indicated that their subjects had changed quite considerably in the intervening period, and predicted that the scores would differ in a particular direction. These predictions were confirmed.

However, these predictions might be confirmed because of changes in the raters perceptions rather than changes by the child, and as such would represent an error factor in the test.

The alternative of changes by the child are however feasible, given the lability of children's emotions at this stage of their development.

Another method of measuring self-concepts by using a pair of identical dolls similarly to the "It Technique" is being developed. Favourable and unfavourable statements are attributed to the dolls, and the child is asked which is more like him/her. Much more work is required in order to test the effectiveness of this method.

With the development of the measuring device it is now possible to study the effect of the pre-school, on the child's self-concepts. It is also possible to consider the effect of different teacher styles on self-concepts at the pre-school level. If this possibility is developed it will be necessary to use external raters, and so it will be important to establish the reliability of the device under these circumstances.

Two further possible avenues for development are to focus on the two transition periods, from the home to pre-school, and from pre-school to infants.

The latter possibility is both the more interesting and the more feasible. It would appear necessary that additional measures of self-concepts would be required if children above the commencing grade of infants' school are to be studied. These may be along similar lines to those already developed, but may also be along the lines of the discrepancy between ideal-self and perceived-self common in the literature.

However, if the study were to cease at the level of considering what changes do occur, or even at the level of relating teaching style to changes in self-concepts; then it would hardly be worthwhile. What is required, and is the aim of this study, would be to consider the effect of teachers focussing on self-concept development as the initial aim of education, and studying the effect of teacher behaviours in pursuit of this aim on self-concept development in the child, and the rate of development, and level of development of scholastic skills.

This would require a longitudinal study of some magnitude, since a number of teachers would need to be involved if generalizations beyond the study population were to have validity.

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APPENDIX A

Child's Name.....

Date of Birth .....

Date of Entry to Pre-School.....

CANBERRA SELF CONCEPT SCALE

Instructions for Completion.

1. Please complete all 25 items. There is a space for additional comments if these are felt necessary.
2. Assign a rating from 1 (low) to 5 (high) on each of the 25 items to each child.

   A 1 rating would imply that the child was in the lower 20% on this attribute in comparison to other children *of the same age*, a 2 in the next 20% and so on.

SOCIAL INTERACTION WITH ADULTS

1. Responds positively to adults.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Confidently seeks assistance from adults when necessary	1	2	3	4	5
3. When choosing activities is not overdependent on adults.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Does not require constant approval or attention from adults.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Is not overly submissive in the presence of adults.	1	2	3	4	5

SOCIAL INTERACTION WITH PEERS

6. Defends own rights.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Willingly shares and takes turns.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Respect for property and possessions of group and individuals.	1	2	3	4	5

9. Can assume both leader and follower role in group situations. 1 2 3 4 5

10. Is consistently popular with peers. 1 2 3 4 5

Additional Comments:

EMOTIONAL MATURITY

11. Can be happy alone. 1 2 3 4 5

12. Shows tenacity and perseverance. 1 2 3 4 5

13. When frustrated, does something positive, for example seeks assistance, chooses another activity, etc. 1 2 3 4 5

14. Does not show excessive verbal aggression. 1 2 3 4 5

15. Does not show excessive physical aggression. 1 2 3 4 5

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

16. Is prepared to attempt new physical skills. 1 2 3 4 5

17. Participates in music making activities. 1 2 3 4 5

18. Is not afraid to use climbing apparatus. 1 2 3 4 5

19. Participates in rhythmic activities. 1 2 3 4 5

20. Uses a wide variety of indoor and outdoor equipment. 1 2 3 4 5

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

21. Shows curiosity in a wide range of activities. 1 2 3 4 5

22. Uses equipment and materials creatively. 1 2 3 4 5

23. Combines ideas imaginatively and expresses them verbally. 1 2 3 4 5

24. Understands the difference between fact and fantasy. 1 2 3 4 5

25. Actively seeks solutions to intellectual problems. 1 2 3 4 5

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TEACHING READING IN THE PRE-SCHOOL

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The pre-school curriculum has not, traditionally, included the teaching of reading — yet, when one talks to parents, one hears of children who have begun to learn to read before they started school and there are, from time to time, references in the literature on beginning reading, to children who learnt to read at an early age (Durkin, 1964). In general, early success is maintained in the primary school years.

What I want to do is to suggest that it is indeed appropriate that reading be taught in the pre-school, to some children, and under certain conditions.

I must emphasize, right now, that I am *not* advocating that reading be taught to *all* children in pre-school. It is perfectly obvious that many children, most children, are simply not developmentally ready to learn to read; they are not ready cognitively to deal with the symbolic system of written language; they are not ready emotionally to sit still and concentrate on an abstract, teacher-directed activity; they are not ready motivationally to *want* to learn to read.

But what about the four year old who has an advanced command of oral language, fluent and clear speech, an obvious and abiding interest in books, appears of average or above-average intelligence and who may even express a desire to learn to read? Of such a child, his pre-school teacher may say, 'Oh, he's really ready to go to school now'.

She may even add that he is a bit bored in pre-school. She may find him, on occasions, a nuisance as he seeks restlessly for cognitive challenge.

It is this sort of a child, more often a girl than a boy, for whom I am advocating a consideration of instruction in reading.

So, the child seems developmentally ready to learn to read. Is there something in the reading task that is cognitively too difficult for a pre-school child? You will now probably all accept Bruner's (1960) dictum, that it is possible to teach any subject to any person of any age if the subject be presented in a suitable way. What I want to do now is to outline two modern approaches to the teaching of reading, in order that you may decide whether the task can be structured in a way appropriate to young learners.

After that, I will discuss some research evidence on the prerequisite skills for learning to read, to pinpoint the exact starting point for the individual learner once the teacher has decided that the child is developmentally ready to learn to read.

The first approach to the teaching of reading is based upon simple conditioning, at the stimulus-response level. Quite recently, Glen Doman, author of "Teach Your Baby to Read" (1965) has been going about Australia reminding us how very simple it is to teach a child to read his first words. The method is to present the young child with an object, say a cup, and the written word for that object at the same time, while naming the object orally.

The young child quickly learns to associate the oral expression with the written expression, so that eventually he is able to "read" cup when the written representation is seen on its own. Let me hasten to add that this associative learning will not lead to the same sort of reading that is engaged in by a mature reader, but it is a sort of reading nevertheless.

One of the first tasks we ask of beginning readers is that they shall be able to say what certain written words are, simply by looking at them; such words are appropriately designated "sight" words, and this approach to learning to read is called the "look-say" method.

One way in which this method of instruction is implemented for beginners is for the teacher to select a set of words which the learner will be meeting in his first primer, and to teach these words individually, often using a set of cards prepared for this purpose and called "flash

cards" (because the objective is to have the learner respond rapidly to each word as it is "flashed" at him).

It is intriguing to speculate as to how the learner discriminates and remembers the word elements in any given set of words. Research, such as that of Marchbanks & Levin (1965) suggests that, contrary to the belief of most teachers of beginning reading, learners do not recognize sight words by shape, but by discriminating the letter elements, especially the first, second and last letters.

I have described briefly one valid and common style of initial reading instruction which uses associative learning to bring the learner to the point where he can name some words "by sight". Typically, such a learner would be able to read such a sentence as "this girl is my friend" after learning each word element first.

Another valid and common method used in instructing beginning readers is to cause them, by the use of inductive reasoning, to discover the alphabetic principle upon which our writing system is based, and then, by the use of deductive reasoning, to encourage them to use this alphabetic principle to decode unknown words. It has also been common, in the past, for teachers to forgo the inductive step; instead, the alphabetic principles were taught by associative learning.

To give an example: The teacher says — *bat, been, boy,* and asks the learner what these words have in common. When the response is — "They all begin with the same sound," then the teacher presents the written form of letter b. (There's some associative learning there.) The next step is to say — *cat, bill, hen,* and to ask the learner to say which begins with the letter b. Typically, such a learner would begin to learn to read such words as *bat, beg, box, big.*

Another example: The teacher says — "*Man, ran, fan* — what have these words in common?" When the response is that they all *end* in the same way, then the teacher presents the phonogram or spelling pattern '*an*' and asks the learner to read *ban.*

I have now outlined briefly the two theoretically opposite ways in which reading may be taught to a beginner. The method which uses associative learning, the "look-say" approach, is obviously simpler from the learner's point of view, as no logical operations are involved. This approach uses skills which the learner already has: the skill to discriminate visually between words and the skill to remember the paired oral and visual presentations made by the teacher — that is, the learner can discriminate between *cat* and *bat,* and remember which is which, even though he may know nothing at all about the English alphabet.

Please do not, at this point, conclude that I am advocating the "look-say" approach for teaching young beginners, for the matter is a bit more involved. It is not appropriate to decide on a suitable method for instructing a young beginner using only evidence about the relative simplicity of the learning task.

It is also necessary to look at the needs of the learner.

When a person begins to learn to read he is, typically, highly motivated towards learning to read. Ideally, he sees reading as a skill which he desires to master for reasons of satisfaction, pleasure, peer and adult approval, curiosity and perhaps utility.

The motivation which the beginner brings to the reading task will probably only persist as long as he is successful in that task. There is no doubt that early success can be achieved by the "look-say" method; but what the learner seeks as he strives to become a reader is autonomy as a reader, and this he cannot reasonably hope to attain if he must apply to another person — be it teacher or mature reader — for the pronounciation of each new word he encounters.

What the beginner needs, quite early, is a method which will allow him to decode new words for himself; that is, he will want to use both inductive and deductive reasoning, related to alphabetic rules, to enable him to progress in reading somewhat independently of other assistance.

Now there are many known examples of children who more or less taught themselves to read; but the majority of learners benefit from a little steering in the direction of noting and remembering the regular phonic structures and spelling patterns within the English writing system.

The learning of these regularities is labelled the "code" approach: and it does seem that

every reader reaches out for this assistance sooner or later, whether the teacher offers it systematically or whether the learner induces and applies his own rules.

So you see, now, that I am advocating an approach more structured than the "look-say" one, after all. I haven't used the word *phonics* so far, and quite deliberately, for this word now covers a multitude of sins, the chief being, perhaps, the belief that each symbol in the English alphabet can be associated with an isolated sound — that 'c' and 'a' and 't' give you *cat*; in fact, they don't: they give you 'kerr-a-tuh', and it is dishonest and confusing to claim otherwise.

What I do accept is the type of code approach labelled *Linguistic-phonics* which, although a bit woolly still in definition is supposed to mean:—analysis of the sound-structure in terms of regular spelling patterns.

For example: one shouldn't isolate 'c' and 'a' and 't' for the learner, but one can legitimately isolate *at* as a part of *cat*, *bat*, and *mat*, and one can ask the learner to figure out *fat* by saying it begins with the same sound as *fill*, and ends with the same sound as *cat*.

So far, I hope I have shown that the beginner can learn to read first of all by a very simple method of associative learning, (for example: this word is *cat*, this word is dog); but that this method limits severely the learner's opportunity to progress in reading independently of his teacher. Therefore, sooner or later, and it's usually sooner, he needs assistance in identifying the sound-symbol regularities of the English writing system so that he can induce generalisations and, in turn, use these generalisations to deduce new words.

Unless the learner can be assisted positively to employ decoding skills, he will lose his enthusiam for learning to read, and learning will cease.

The question now is: can young learners manage the inductive and deductive reasoning that is necessary if progress is to be made in learning to read?

It appears that they can, if and only if they have the prerequisite skills for learning to read. (Downing & Thackray, 1971). The prerequisite skills are of three types: visual skills, auditory skills and cognitive skills. Teachers have always been vaguely aware of these prerequisite skills, and have made many and elaborate gestures towards exercising children's skills in these three areas, but the gestures have been all too often vague, and the skills have not been objectified in behaviours that were sufficiently precise.

I'd like to talk a little about each of the three pre-requisite skills in turn. My aim is to clarify each skill, and to get you to consider whether children of pre-school age do achieve, or can achieve, these skills.

First, the visual skills. The most important are visual discrimination and visual memory. Before he can learn to read, a beginner must obviously be able to discriminate between words when he sees them written down. If you show a beginner a line of words — say, *cat*, *cat*, *bat*, *cat*, he must be able to show you which one looks different, before he can learn to read them. I suggest to you that any child from the time he has mastered the concepts *same* and *different* will be able to show you which word is different. This could occur at 2 or 3 or 4 years of age.

Visual *memory* can be assessed by providing a learner with a short list of written words, showing him one of those words written separately on a piece of paper, then removing the single word from his sight and asking him to show you on his list the word you exposed separately. Once a beginner gets the hang of what you want him to do, it's not at all difficult for many 3 year olds to demonstrate their visual memory skill with words long before they learn to read those words.

Next, the auditory skills that are pre-requisite for learning to read. The most important are: auditory discrimination and auditory memory. The 'same' and 'different' concepts can be used to test a beginner's skills in auditory discrimination, though he will also need to be able to use the concept of beginning and ending in time. Say *boy* and *bat*. Are these words the same or different at the beginning?

To sample the skill of auditory memory, say *churn*, *fix*, *made*, which word sounded like *father* at the beginning?

The third pre-requisite reading skill is to understand the concepts used in reading. The concepts of *word* and *sound* I have involved already; others are *letter*, *page*, *book*, *sentence*, *story*.

Do teachers believe that some children in pre-schools have these necessary pre-requisite skills? Or that they could acquire them pleasureably and without stress?

Recent empirical investigations suggest that the answer is yes.

Mitchell (1965) tested the visual discrimination skills of 4 and 5 year olds. The subjects were lower socio-economic status kindergarten pupils who had received no training in pre-requisite reading skills. He found that 85% of the children achieved 75% correct responses on typical reading readiness work-book exercises on the discrimination of letters and words.

Paradis (1974) also tested the visual discrimination skills of 5 year olds. He found that 97% of kindergarten grade children, and 69% of pre-school children, all without formal training, were successful on more than 80% of pre-reading activities selected from a variety of pre-reading activities taken from basal reading schemes. That is, the visual skills which are pre-requisite for learning to read present few difficulties to young children.

However, auditory discrimination skills develop more slowly. Paradis (1968) tested a group of low socio-economic status 5 year olds on rhyming sounds; only 59% of the children attained his criterion of 75% correct responses. When tested on initial consonants (same-different) only 7% achieved his criterion of success.

On the other hand, Rosner (1974) demonstrated that 4 year olds could be trained to perform auditory analysis tasks fairly easily. At the end of one year, the experimental group performed significantly better than an untrained control group — and the control group was one year older.

As for the concepts of reading, Stott (1973), one of the most perceptive people in the world on the subject of the teaching of reading, gives examples of 5 year olds' failure to understand the concepts *word*, *letter* and *sound* as contributing to lack of success in learning to read.

So far, I have mentioned the different learning styles involved in different theoretical approaches to the teaching of reading, with a view to deciding which approach would best suit a young beginner. I suggested that the "look-say" approach is a good starting point, but that the learner soon needs tools for decoding, for which task a code approach using linguistic-phonics is the most useful.

Then I looked at the pre-requisite skills you need if you are going to make progress in learning to read. It seems that the necessary visual skills are usually present in young children; that auditory skills (essential for the linguistic-phonic approach) are less developed in the young child, but that they may be fostered by good teaching; and that many young children lack the concepts used by reading teachers. It is likely that young children can acquire these concepts quite easily if only teachers focus their attention on them.

Once the pre-requisite skills are acquired, even young children appear to have no difficulty in managing the simple inductive and deductive thinking which is necessary for progress in reading.

Why, then, have teachers been so reluctant to teach reading in the pre-school?

In the first place, pre-school teachers haven't been prepared to do so during their teacher-education course. This situation could change with so many teacher education courses preparing pre-school and infant teachers; but, in many institutions there is still an assumption that the teaching of reading is the province of the schools rather than the pre-schools.

Next, schools have voiced their disapproval of the pre-schools moving into what they define as "their" area. I find this objection outrageous! Educators have been talking for a long time now about the individualisation of instruction. If the child is ready to learn to read, and he's in a pre-school, that's where he should be taught. It's high time we realized the ideal of continuous progress education and the seamless curriculum.

Next, many parents and teachers claim that young children want to play and be happy and enjoy their childhood. I think that's just sentimental twaddle. It quite ignores the fact that children also want to grow up, and that learning to read is a joyful part of growing up. It can be accomplished in 30 minutes per day, which would be willingly exchanged for play by the child who wants to learn to read. Properly taught, learning to read is as enjoyable as, or

more enjoyable than, playing. The thirty minutes that I suggest is based on about 10 minutes instruction with the teacher and about 20 minutes of practice, games and other reinforcement activities undertaken by the child.

Finally, I think many pre-school teachers are reluctant to begin teaching reading to an individual child because they fear pressure from other parents who may be anxious for their child to be a high achiever, academically.

At this point, I think teachers must stick to their professional guns and insist on their right to decide what teaching and learning is appropriate for each individual child. They certainly take this line in other areas of the curriculum. If the teacher can't cope with this absolute position, then a graceful way out is to accede to the parent's request, and begin teaching the pre-requisite skills, subject to the ability and willingness of the child in question.

If you have followed the argument so far, you will be ready to teach a pre-schooler to read, but may be wondering where to begin. Do any of the pre-requisite skills need attention? How does one introduce linguistic phonics?

I would like to recommend strongly a teacher's manual, which sets out brilliantly a sequence for teaching the auditory and visual pre-requisite skills of reading, and then follows on with the mature reading skills. This is "Systematic Reading Instruction" by G. G. Duffy and B. B. Sherman, N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1972. This excellent work lays out the reading task in terms of graded objectives, each with a pre-test, teaching hints, and a post-test. The skills are presented in a game-like format, which even young learners find attractive. The teacher-made materials for presenting the skills may be left in the classroom for children to play with.

My final point is to draw your attention to what you probably already know about the teaching of reading to young children:

- it is an activity for the individual child, even when several children begin at about the same time and may perhaps be grouped for instruction
- the young learner must set the pace for his learning, and the teacher must accept his decision to quit at any time: he's probably learnt enough for just now
- the teacher has an abiding responsibility to foster the development of oral language in all pupils. One of the best ways of doing this is by reading to children, every day, more than once if possible; in the case of the beginning reader, reading to him is of vital importance both as a motivational technique and in order to acquaint him with the structures he will encounter in the written form of his language
- finally, pre-school teachers have always accepted the principle of individualisation of instruction. My plea is that they should no longer make an exception when it comes to the question of teaching a child to read.

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SOME RECENT BOOKS WORTH NOTING

On the social context of early childhood education and early childhood services:

Dawson, M. (Ed.) *Australian Families*, Wiley Australia, 1974.

Edgar, D. E. (Ed.) *Social Changes in Australia* (Readings in Sociology), Melbourne: Cheshire Publishing Co., 1974.

Burns, A., Fegan, M. & Sparkes, A., *Working Mothers and Their Children*: The Electrical Trades Union Study. School of Behavioural Sciences, Macquarie University, 1974. (A local survey of the actual arrangements and preferences of a group of working mothers).

On current trends in work with young children:

Almy, M., *The Early Childhood Educator at Work*. McGraw-Hill, 1975 (paperback). (An important indicator of broadening horizons in the early childhood field, written with Almy's usual skill and insight).

Tizard, Barbara. *Pre-School Education in Great Britain: A Research Review*, Social Science Research Council, 1974. (State House, High Holborn, London WC1R 4th. $1.50). (A report of who is doing what in Great Britain, ranging from analyses of curriculum to parent development, together with opinions from many people on what is needed).

Evans, E., *Contemporary Influences in Early Childhood Education*, Holt-Saunders, 1975. (This new edition of Evans updates the earlier analyses of several influences, e.g. Piagetian theory, behavioural analysis, Montessori.) It includes as well some new sections, e.g. one on parents and television as major sources of change. Especially useful for looking at the background of many curricula.

Webb, Lesley, *Purpose and Practice in Nursery Education*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1974 (paperback). (Contains a number of excellent chapters asking: What are we trying to do? And what evidence is there that we are achieving it? What do we mean when we say our goal is "socialization"? What evidence is there that teachers are more effective than para-professionals?

This sympathetic analysis of objectives and techniques ends with a useful section on implications for teacher education, and a stirring call for the importance of those who train teachers).

On studies of child development and its implications;

From a wide range, I have selected three that seem a little different from those we usually see:

Fein, G., & Clarke-Stewart, A., *Day Care in Context*, Wiley, 1973. Highly recommended. This book takes the unusual step of looking at what is known about particular aspects and conditions of development (e.g. language and its variations with different environments) and then drawing out implications for caregivers. Equally useful for sessional and extended settings, even though labelled "day care".

Webb, Lesley, *Making a Start on Child Study*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1975. So far only seen in brief glimpses, but promises to be a good basic introduction to ways of observing and phenomena to look for.

Richards, M. R. (Ed.), *The Integration of a Child into a Social World*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1974. A series of chapters that give an up-to-date account of studies on "attachment", with considerable attention to early development in terms of signals given and received.

Final note: See the magazine *New Scientist* (1974) for a series of short articles on current research with very young children (0-12 months usually). These are written in reasonable form and can be a useful lead into current work. Unfortunately, no references are given.

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